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TOP: the spring fashion circus rolls into town (page 70). ABOVE: create a table of love with Skye McAlpine (page 108). LEFT: new home trends to try (page 102)

On love...

It still floors me how one can be engulfed by love. How deeply and ardently we can feel for another person – so much so that we might write them public declarations of our devotion, as Ayọ̀bámi Adébáyọ̀ and Emmanuel Iduma reveal on page 24, or choose to lie on top of them, bodies morphing into one, like the two men in Erica Reade's *Beach Lovers* portraits on page 32 (I first saw this exhibition in New York last summer and I am so happy to now be sharing it in *Red*). Indeed, Skye McAlpine's newest book, *A Table Full Of Love*, is her expression of affection in food form, and, as she says, on page 108, 'There's no better way to make someone fall head over heels for you than to cook them a meal.'

This issue is dedicated to love and all its dimensions. From the challenges of starting a relationship in the midst of a mental health crisis, as Clare Mohan did with her partner Erin, on page 144, and the complexities of managing your money as a couple on page 56, to comedian and podcaster Cariad Lloyd's thoughtful and wise advice on how to navigate the loss of a loved one on page 36. And, of course, because we all know love must first take root in ourselves, we sent writer Chloe Gray to a 'pussy consciousness experience' on behalf of *Red*, to investigate the promise that embracing her body would be the first step to a life of happiness. Intrigued? Turn straight to page 140.

The joy of reading *Red* from cover to cover, is that I always find something game-changing for my own life. This month – apart from learning double denim and kohl pencils are both back – it's former monk Jay Shetty's advice for 'practising love', on page 40. He suggests using a framework called 'The Four Es': first, you partake in Entertainment (like watching TV), you level up with Experiments and Experiences (trying something new together), then it's Education (learning in tandem) and finally Engaging (taking part in meaningful activity that requires you to support each other). My husband, Jaron, and I are currently choosing between climbing (his suggestion) or rollerskating classes (mine). I'll keep you posted!

Sarah Tomczak

Editor Sarah Tomczak

LOOKING FOR THE PERFECT PRESENT? TREAT A LOVED ONE TO A *RED* SUBSCRIPTION. TURN TO PAGE 66 FOR OUR GREAT OFFER.

Editor's picks

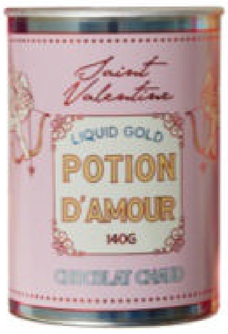
This handblown Murano glass jug is a heirloom piece.
Bellini Jug, £299, Skye McAlpine Tavola

I've just bought this to refresh my living room.
Stool, £225, Oka

The beauty buy ALL my friends are raving about.
Miracle Balm in Dusty Rose, £36, Jones Road

These stripes have won my heart.
Jumper, £165, Toast

Sweets for my sweet.
Hot Chocolate, £10, Anthropologie



PHOTOGRAPHY: JONTY DAVIES

ALVA CLAIRE for MARINA RINALDI

MARINA RINALDI

Red

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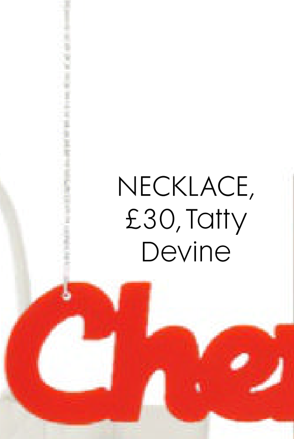
BENEFIT BENETINT, £16

BAG, £195, Isabel Marant



NECKLACE, £30, Tatty Devine

EAR CUFF, £1,595, Kinraden

SARAH JESSICA PARKER LOVELY, from £22

GUCCI NAIL POLISH IN 413 ELLEN BLUSH, £24

SOSA TRAY IN BARBADOS CHERRY, £32, Dar Leone

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MARCH 2023

AYỌ̀BÁMI ADÉBÁYỌ̀

shares her love letters on page 24.

MY CELEBRITY CRUSH IS…

Chinua Achebe. I've always admired his calm mien and forceful intellect.

SKYE McALPINE

writes about cooking for the people you love on page 108.

MY CELEBRITY CRUSH IS…

Robert Redford in *The Way We Were*. So dashing and dreamy.

CARIAD LLOYD

explores grief on page 36.

MY CELEBRITY CRUSH IS…

Iain Glen. Obscure, I know, but *Game Of Thrones* has a lot to answer for.

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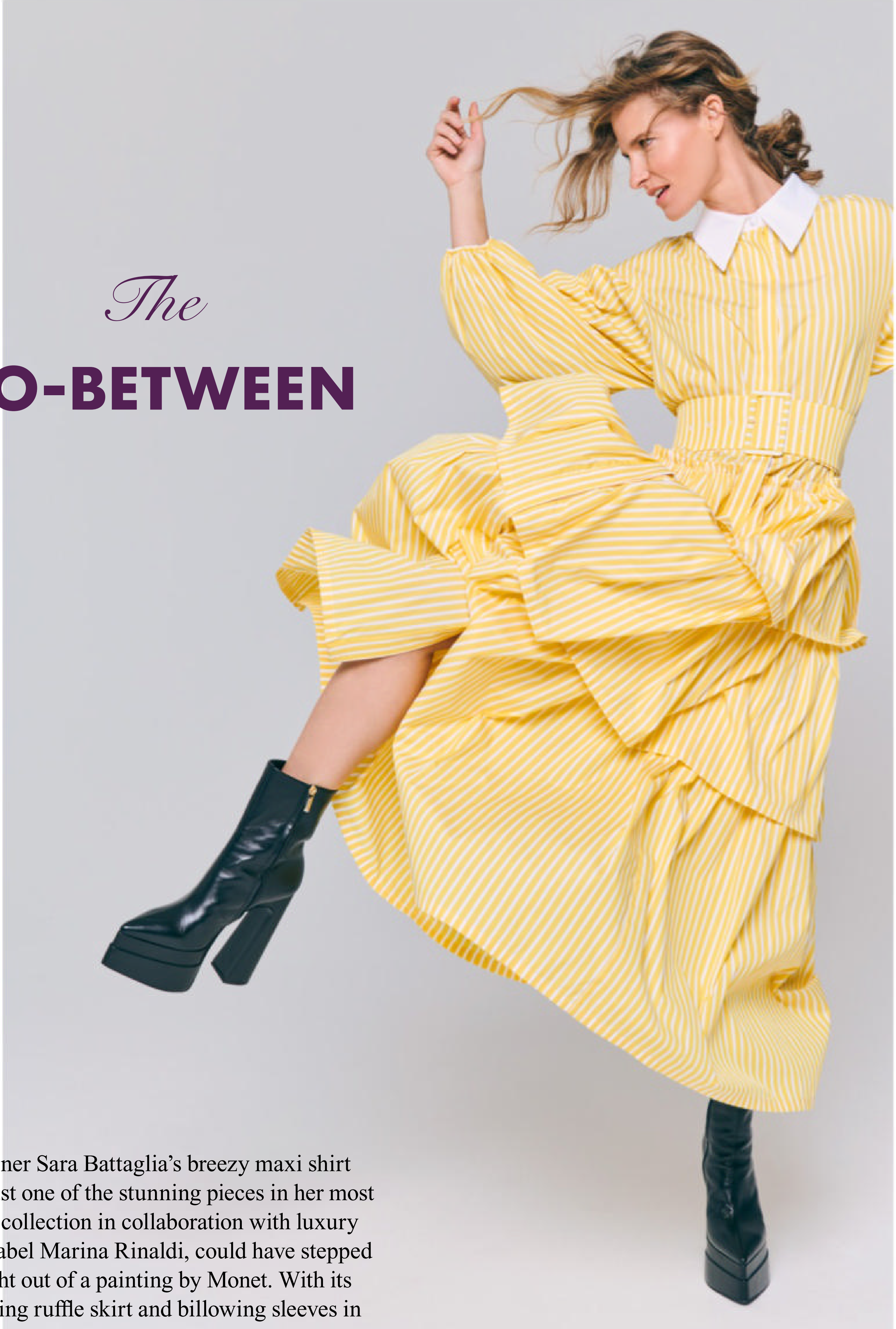
STYLE

Edited by
Oonagh Brennan

The GO-BETWEEN



Designer Sara Battaglia's breezy maxi shirt dress, just one of the stunning pieces in her most recent collection in collaboration with luxury Italian label Marina Rinaldi, could have stepped straight out of a painting by Monet. With its cascading ruffle skirt and billowing sleeves in 'drawing room' lemon ticking stripes, it evokes nostalgic thoughts of an Impressionist scene by the river Seine. Wear with stompy platform boots to bring a trans-seasonal edge to a summer sensation.

DRESS, £830, Marina Rinaldi x Sara Battaglia

WORDS: OONAGH BRENNAN. PHOTOGRAPHY: ELISABETH HOFF. BOOTS, £595, RUSSELL & BROMLEY

JEANEOLOGY

IN A SEASON THAT'S ALL ABOUT LOW-KEY LUXURY, DENIM TRANSFORMS FROM WARDROBE SUPPORT ACT TO THE STAR OF THE STYLE SHOW, ADDING AN OFF-DUTY NONCHALANCE TO EVERYTHING FROM BLACK TIE TO CROCHET

JEANS, £225, DL1961

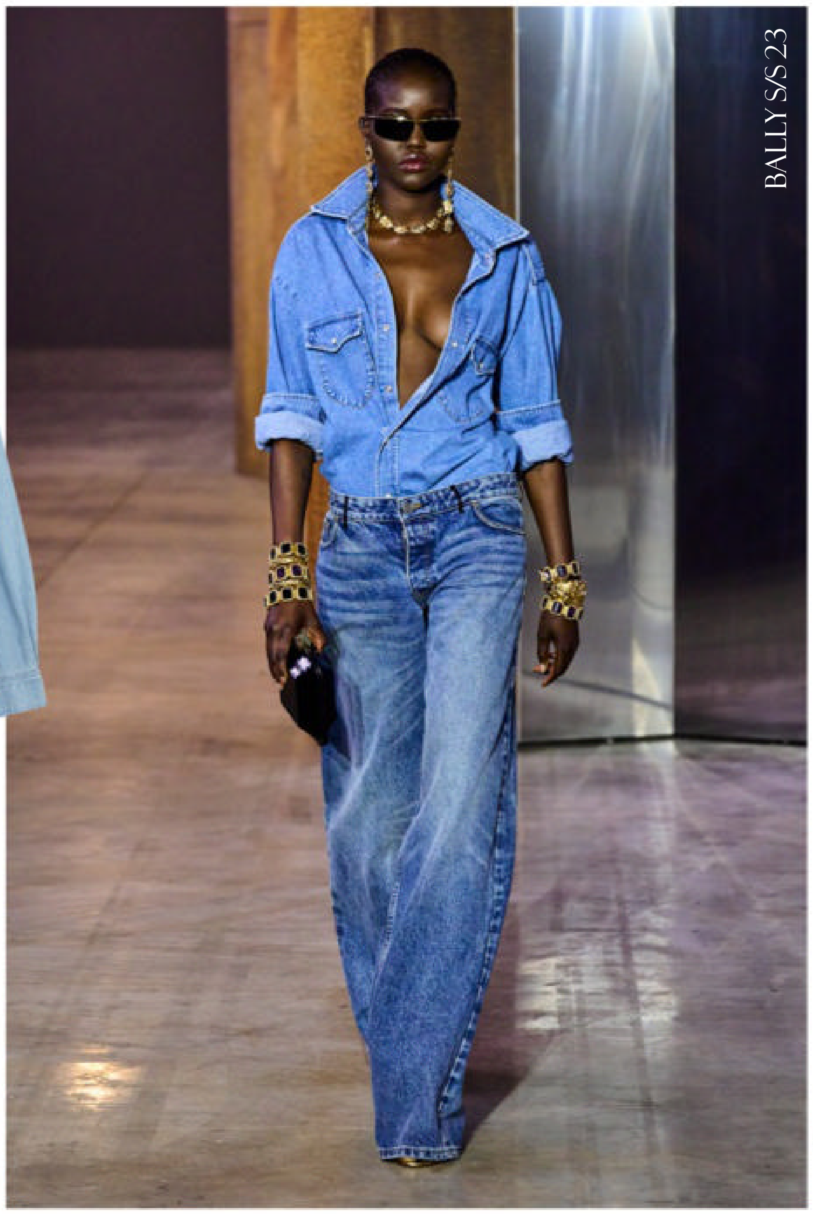
BRACELET, £24, Free People

SHIRT, £75, Hush

SHOES, £65, Charles & Keith

CHARLOTTE TILBURY THE SUPER NUDES LIPSTICK IN RUNWAY ROYALTY, £26

JEANS, £89, Hobbs


BALLY S/S 23

Matchy-matchy structured dark denim makes an instantly smart combo

SHIRT, £85, Aligne

EARRINGS, £88, Mignonne Gavigan

JEANS, £75, Aligne

COAT, £325, Ted Baker

BAG, £645, Jacquemus

Double duty

Bad memories of double denim, be gone! Bally's standout look, complete with glistening gold hardware, is elegance from head to toe with a subtle hint of throwback. So, keep your jeans slung low, hems floor-skimming and shirt collar popped, and add a serious dose of attitude.

BAG, £129, JW Pei

SHIRT, £55, White Stuff

Clash shades of blue for a relaxed weekend look

SUNGLASSES, £220, Max Mara

MULES, £780, Bottega Veneta

JACKET, £195, Wyse London

CUFF, £590, Jil Sander at MatchesFashion

CALCATERRA S/S 23

BURBERRY S/S 23

BAG, £389, Sandro

BAG, £490, JW Anderson

BAG, £350, See By Chloé

JUMPSUIT, £220, Wyse London

JACKET, £75, French Connection

BAG, £209, Sandro

SANDALS, £149, Arket

JEANS, £249, Sandro

GESTUZ S/S 23

BLOUSE, £69, Sister Jane

NECKLACE, £430, Roxanne Assoulin

Breathe new-season life into your pussy-bow blouses by teaming them with the utility trend

JEANS, £70, Gant

BAG, £575, Loewe

Utility luxe

From Givenchy to Isabel Marant, the utility aesthetic is big news. This baggy style, with practical, oversized pockets, works well in a timeless palette of blue and white, with the odd frill and natural accents to add a softer feel.

CAP, £315, Prada

TOP, £295, Isabel Marant

GIVENCHY S/S 23

TIBI S/S 23

LE VERNIS
CHANEL

CHANEL LE VERNIS LONGWEAR NAIL COLOUR IN VERDE PASTELLO, £25

Add elements of green, animal print and raffia for an easy outfit refresher

JEANS, £280, Frame

BAG, £750, Wandler

DRESS, £290, Jason Wu at Net-A-Porter

EARRINGS, £75, Essential Antwerp

KHAITE S/S23

BODYSUIT £48, Free People

JEANS, £99, Whistles

WATCH, £1,600, Tag Heuer

SHOES, £48, Next

Play with proportions and layer a mini shift dress over straight jeans

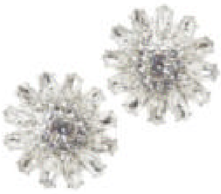
VICTORIA BECKHAM BEAUTY FUTURE LASH MASCARA, £26

DRESS, £35, Monki

JEANS, £280, Frame

Into the night

Tuxedo black and shimmering silver may seem like an unusual spring trend, but it adds a powerful punch to denim at Bally and Khaite. Sheer bodysuits, structured satin and summer sequins provide a slick yet opulent makeover, upping the stakes for wide-leg and relaxed-straight jeans alike.



EARRINGS, £22, Hobbs

Black blazer + blue jeans = a classically cool combo

BAG, £179, Arket

BOOTS, £59.99, H&M

BLAZER, £217, The Frankie Shop

BALLY S/S23

MARQUES'ALMEIDA S/S23

JEANS, £380, Agolde

Try a metallic coating for a nonchalant way to achieve high shine

MOLLY GODDARD S/S23

Go west

Etro and Rejina Pyo matched frayed seams and floral patterns with puff sleeves and tulle for an ethereal quality, while patchwork co-ords were offered by Tod's. Wear straighter cuts under summer dresses this spring, or go full prairie-western with a pair of cowboy boots.

HAT, £85, Loeffler Randall

DRESS, £98, Sister Jane

SHOES, £195, Porte & Paire at Net-A-Porter

GUCCI NAIL POLISH IN 413 ELLEN BLUSH, £24

JEANS, £315, E.L.V. Denim

ETRO S/S23

BAG, £445, Tory Burch

ULLA JOHNSON S/S23

JEANS, £445, Veronica Beard

EARRINGS, about £4,500, Sophie Bille Brahe

TOP, £285, Lug Von Siga at Net-A-Porter

JEANS, £100, Levi's

Lighter denim lends itself to soft florals and pastel tones

BAG, £315, Max Mara

EARRINGS, £180, Kate Spade

DRESS, £425, Sea

PAT McGRATH LABS SKIN FETISH DIVINE BLUSH IN PARADISE VENUS, £30

JACKET, £248, Farm Rio at Net-A-Porter

Denim makes tricky trends like crochet instantly more wearable

BOOTS, £328, Free People

JEANS, £225, Claudie Pierlot

KENZO S/S 23

EARRINGS, £29, Whistles

TIE, £180, Gucci

JACKET, £399, Claudie Pierlot

A tie is your unexpected preppy accessory

CLOGS, £235, Ba&sh

SKIRT, £240, Jeanerica

Jeanerica's Atelier collection makes the mini skirt all grown up

NECKLACE, £195, Missoma

SKIRT, £46, Topshop at ASOS

RING, £440, Bea Bongiasca

MIU MIU S/S 23

BAG, £29.99, Mango

SHISEIDO MICROLINER INK IN YELLOW, £22

SHOES, £555, JW Anderson

SHIRT, £350, Jigsaw

BAG, £500, Max Mara

ALTUZARRA S/S 23

Working girl

When it comes to smart-casual, denim skirts and classic tailoring are a match made in heaven. Altuzarra's ankle-grazing maxi offered a polished alternative to jeans, while midi and mini lengths gave an updated coolness to Miu Miu's oversized preppy blazers. Finish with unexpected accessories such as mules and pops of bright citrus shades.

SKIRT, £225, Ganni

SHIRT, £185, Yaitte

BROOCH, £170, Miu Miu

CAP £35, Gant

CAP, £39, Arket

A denim baseball cap gives a varsity nod to the trend

DIOR ADDICT LIP TINT IN NATURAL RED TANGERINE, £30

CAP, £320, Saint Laurent

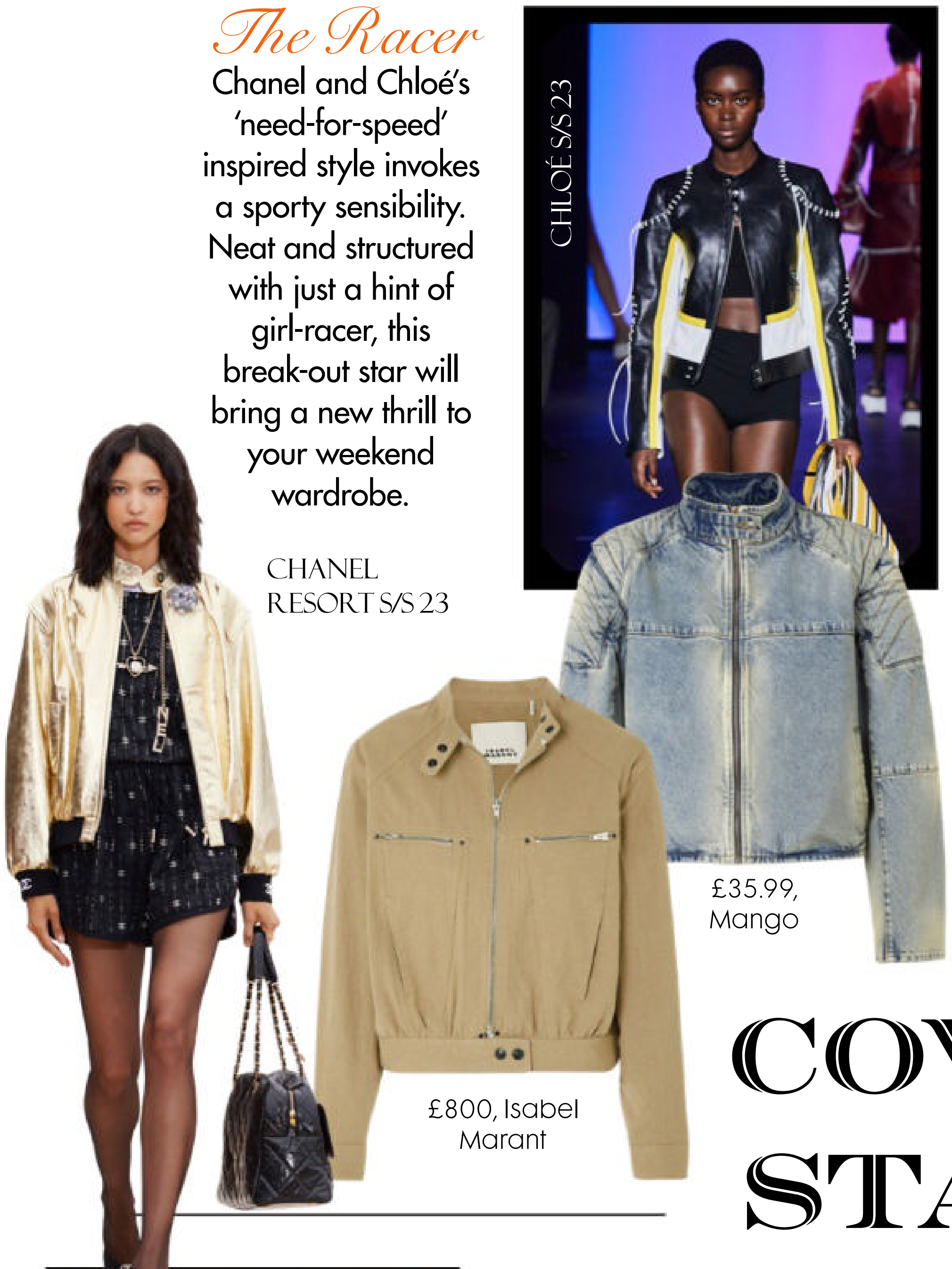
COMPILED BY: JODIE DUNWORTH. PHOTOGRAPHY: IMAXTREE

COVER STARS

SPRING'S BEST STYLE REFRESH? A NEW JACKET

The Racer

Chanel and Chloé's 'need-for-speed' inspired style invokes a sporty sensibility. Neat and structured with just a hint of girl-racer, this break-out star will bring a new thrill to your weekend wardrobe.



CHLOÉ S/S 23

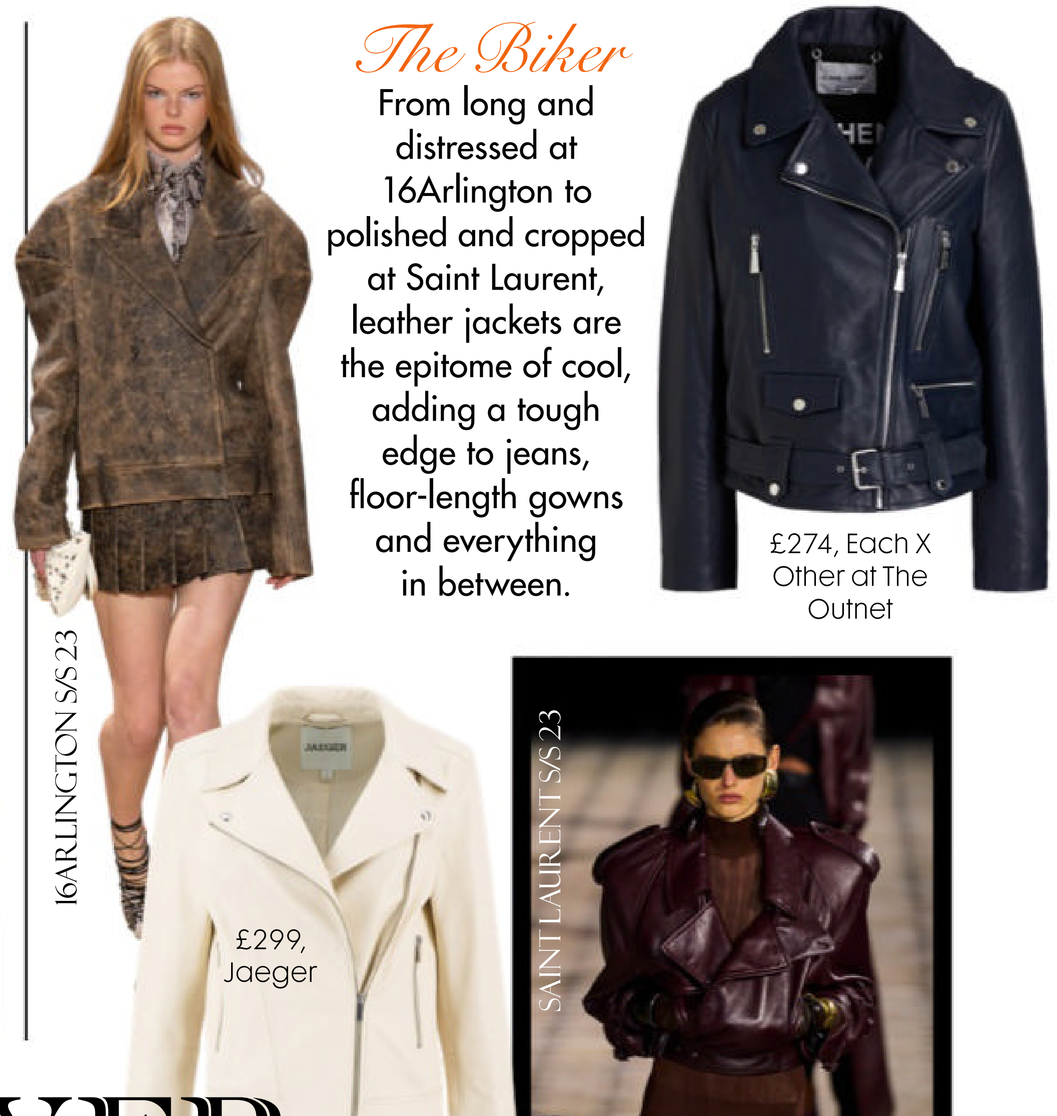
CHANEL RESORT S/S 23

£35.99, Mango

£800, Isabel Marant

The Biker

From long and distressed at 16Arlington to polished and cropped at Saint Laurent, leather jackets are the epitome of cool, adding a tough edge to jeans, floor-length gowns and everything in between.



£274, Each X Other at The Outnet

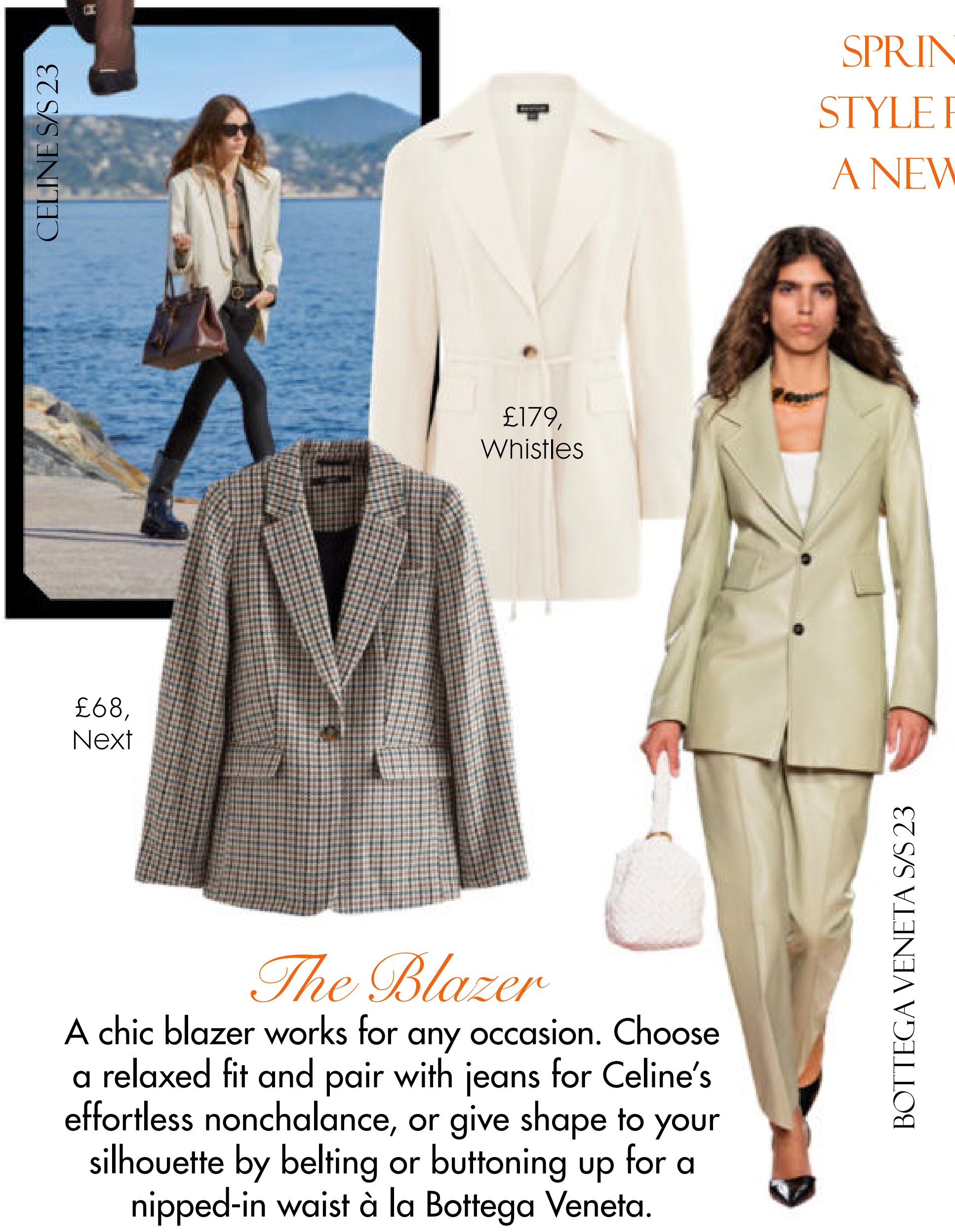
16ARLINGTON S/S 23

£299, Jaeger

SAINT LAURENT S/S 23

The Blazer

A chic blazer works for any occasion. Choose a relaxed fit and pair with jeans for Celine's effortless nonchalance, or give shape to your silhouette by belting or buttoning up for a nipped-in waist à la Bottega Veneta.



CELINE S/S 23

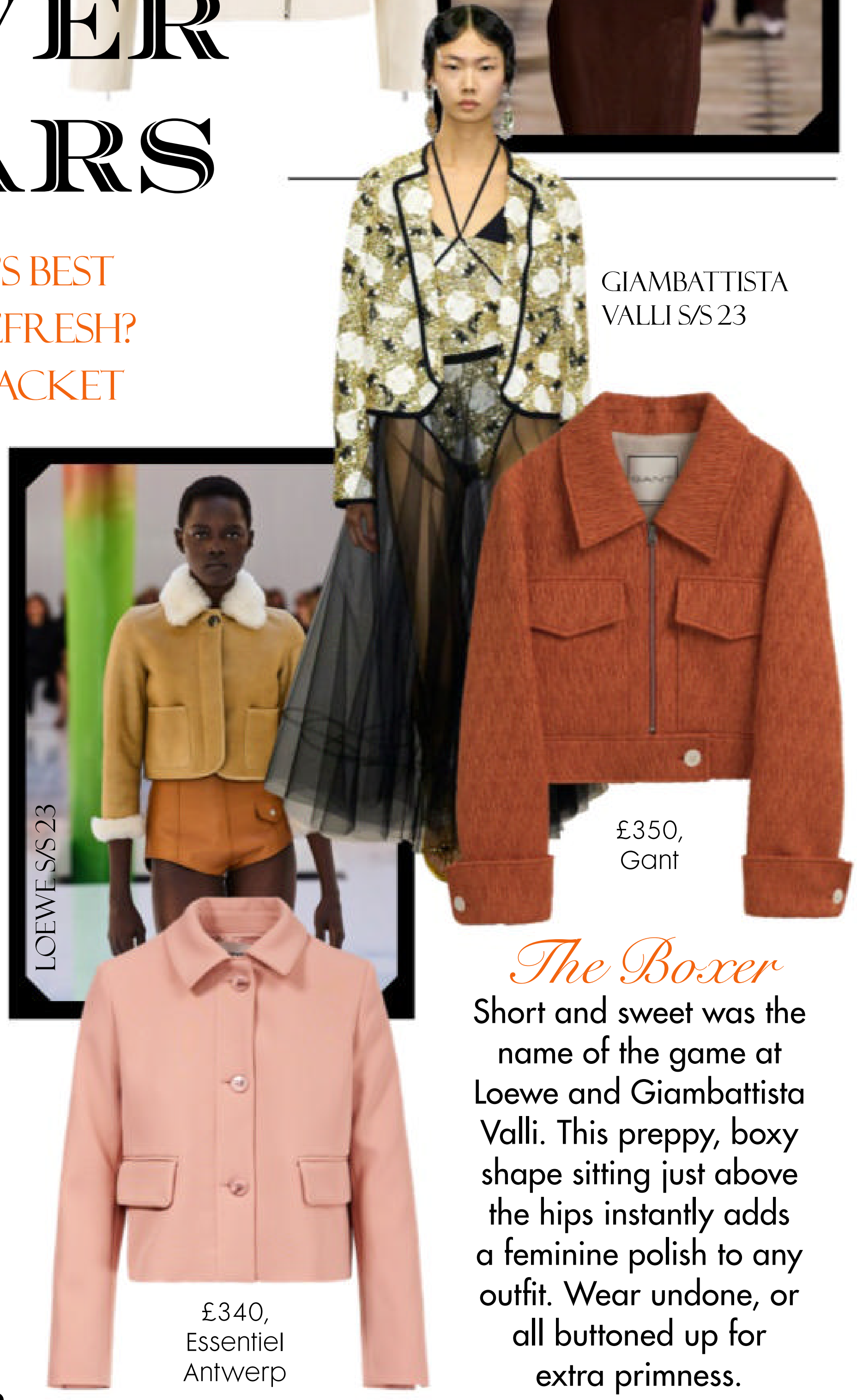
£179, Whistles

£68, Next

BOTTEGA VENETA S/S 23

The Boxer

Short and sweet was the name of the game at Loewe and Giambattista Valli. This preppy, boxy shape sitting just above the hips instantly adds a feminine polish to any outfit. Wear undone, or all buttoned up for extra primness.



GIAMBATTISTA VALLI S/S 23

LOEWE S/S 23

£350, Gant

£340, Essentiel Antwerp

COMPILED BY: JODIE DUNWORTH. PHOTOGRAPHY: IMAXTREE

£195, Isabel Marant

£225, JW Anderson

BOTTEGA VENETA SUMMER 23

MODerate Protection
Coppertone
4
SUNTAN LOTION

£295, Kate Spade

£240, Orla Kiely

£525, Anya Hindmarch

£295, Coach

£650, Paul Smith

£200, Themoirè

LITTLE & LARGE

FROM CLASHING PATTERNS TO UNLIKELY TEXTURE COMBINATIONS, REVEL IN THE PICK 'N' MIX FRIVOLITY OF THESE BIG AND LITTLE BAG PAIRINGS

RIVE GAUCHE
SAINT LAURENT

£1,350, Saint Laurent

£235, Loeffler Randall

£199, Whistles

£310, Emporio Armani

£34, Ace & Prince

£285, Ba&sh

COMPILED BY: JODIE DUNWORTH

THE STYLE INFLUENCER

RED FASHION DIRECTOR OONAGH BRENNAN SHARES HER FASHION FAVOURITES

Around £487, Laura Bailey x Ilio Smeraldo

£595, Russell & Bromley

£175, Dune London

CHANGE PLATFORMS

It's time to step into a pair of platform boots, giving cropped trousers, long flares and dresses some 1970s stomp and making our legs look endless in the process. Check out the olive green and brown pairs in soft leather that Laura Bailey has designed in collaboration with Italian label Ilio Smeraldo.

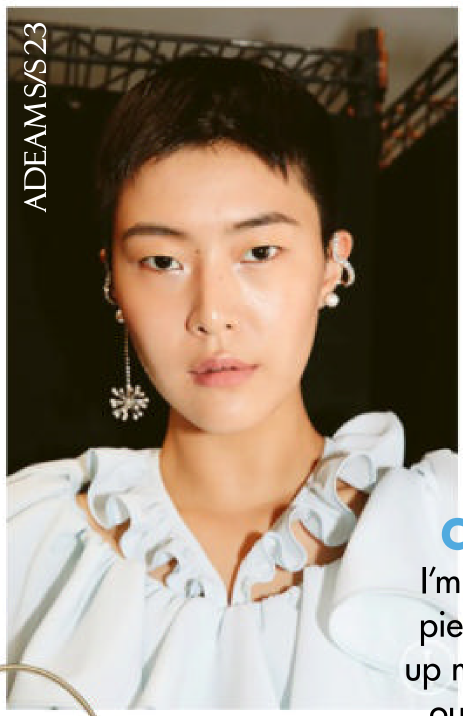
LAURA BAILEY/ILIO SMERALDO

BAG, £495

BAG, £545

SOMETHING FOR THE WEEKEND

London Velvet's new logo cord duffle bags are not only perfect for mini-breaks and overnight stays but they will also give your spring outfits a witty sports-lux edge. I love the rose pink and tomato red cord, edged in smart tan leather.



ADEAM S/S23

CUFF LOVE

I'm too scared to get piercings all the way up my ear (cartilage… ouch!), but I think a chunky, sparkly cuff of diamonds or pearls mixed in with my hoops or diamond danglers looks super-cool. This adds a punky edge when I wear my hair in a ponytail. Otiumberg has the best selection.

£1,595, Kinraden

£59, Missoma

£140, Camilla And Marc x Otiumberg

JUMPER, £690

JUMPER, £785

DRESS, £890

TOP, £480

SKIRT, £665

STRIPE-GEIST

Iconic 1990s label Clements Ribeiro relaunches for S/S 23 with a gorgeous cashmere collection in its signature stripes. Produced by Barrie Knitwear in Scotland (which also makes cashmere for Chanel and Hermès), the sweaters, dresses and knitted skirts will add a joyful spring step to your new-season wardrobe.

LOGOMANIA

DESIGNER JEWELLERY IS AN AFFORDABLE WAY TO BUY INTO YOUR FAVOURITE BRANDS. IT'S TIME TO SHOW YOUR ALLEGIANCE…

NECKLACE, £59, Seol + Gold

NECKLACE, £22, Orelia

RING, £185, Hotlips by Solange

RING, £150, Celeste Starre

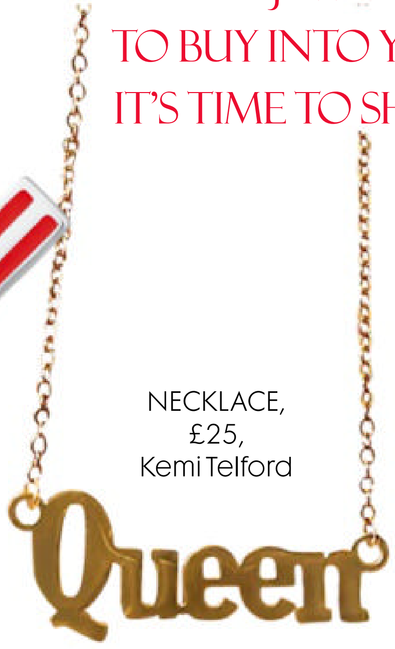
BRACELET, £1,875, Chanel at Susan Caplan

EARRINGS, £480, Prada

CHANEL CRUISE COLLECTION 23

NECKLACE, £30, Tatty Devine

NECKLACE, from £50, Scream Pretty


NECKLACE, £25, Kemi Telford

EARRINGS, £320, Valentino

BROOCH, £300, Adidas x Gucci

BROOCH, £450, YSL at Omnēque

EARRINGS, £220, Miu Miu

BRACELET, £390, Dior

EARRING, £39, Missoma

COMPILED BY: JO ATKINSON. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

PLATINUM

EXCLUSIVELY AT DFS

PLATINUM EXTRAVAGANCE | LARGE CORNER SOFA £3,899

YOU LIKE SPACE FOR YOUR MIND AND YOUR YOGA MAT

Your social life is busy, but your home life is calm. That's why the Extravagance is your thing. It does serenity in style, with its modern shape, neutral tone and wooden detailing. It complements textures from rattan rugs to leather-bound books (and even foam yoga mats).

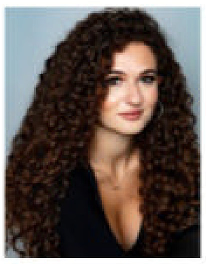
dfs | WHAT'S YOUR THING?

Platinum extravagance 3 corner 3. Bolster cushions and scatters are included, except Icon Accent Scatter which is available as an optional extra. See in selected stores or online for details. Delivery charges apply.

Just a crush

IT'S NOT WEIRD OR SILLY TO OBSESS OVER A FILM STAR, INSISTS ARIELLE STEELE. ACTUALLY, IT'S ONE OF LIFE'S GREATEST JOYS

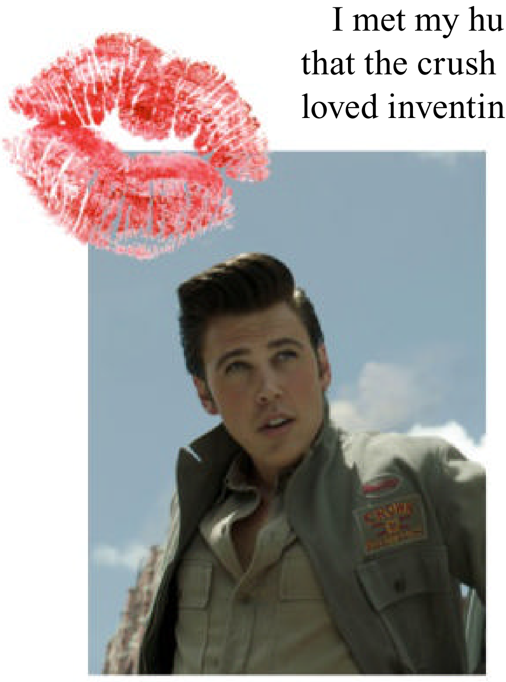
Last summer, I fell for a man with intoxicating charisma and an impossibly sexy deep voice. And all while my husband was in the room. We were watching Baz Luhrmann's *Elvis*, and I quickly developed an obscene crush on its lead actor, Austin Butler. 'He's gorgeous,' I swooned sporadically throughout the film. 'Aren't I gorgeous, too?' my husband asked. 'Of course,' I replied (and it's true) – but this was a new crush, and I was embracing the fall.



Arielle is unashamed of her celebrity crushes

I've lived a life bookmarked by celebrity crushes. It started with Leonardo DiCaprio in *Romeo + Juliet* (brooding and objectively beautiful) and continued with Adam Brody's Seth Cohen in *The OC* (funny and a little dorky). In my teenage bedroom, I had a life-size cardboard model of Edward Cullen from *Twilight*, and a heart-shaped collage of my favourite faces on the wall.

I met my husband aged 15, so he's always understood this side of me. Because he recognises that the crush itself isn't a real, tangible thing; it's a fantasy. It's *fun*. As someone who always loved inventing stories and learning everything I could about whatever I was interested in, my celebrity crushes represented an intersection of these fragments of myself: obsessive, romantic, imaginative. I'd say crushing is a personality trait.



But fancying celebrities isn't considered 'cool'. Eventually, I tore down the posters, but my crushes would still dance around my mind; we'd meet at parties, or I'd find them lost in London and offer to give them directions. These silly stories were a welcome, quiet escape from the stresses and strains of adulthood. Watching Austin Butler wiggle his pelvis like Elvis awoke something in me again – a youthful enjoyment that I decided to dive into wholeheartedly.

The next day, I watched and read every interview with him, before progressing to TikTok videos of his best moments. Clearly, I wasn't the only one who had plunged into a Butler-shaped abyss; one comment on a video read: 'Enough!!! I can't take it any more! I need him so bad.' I laughed in recognition, then watched *Elvis* again.

Next, I spread the word like gospel. 'I am obsessed with Austin Butler,' I gushed to my colleagues. One replied: 'Ohmygod, me, too, have you seen the comparison videos of him with actual Elvis?' Obviously, I had, which sparked an invigorating conversation. Other people raised their eyebrows listening to two grown-up women fixate on a man they'll never meet. But the ridiculousness is part of the pleasure.

> *'I watched every interview with him, before progressing to TikTok videos'*

We all fancy people – whatever our relationship status. Science says that having a crush activates the reward centre in your brain, releasing the feelgood hormone dopamine, which makes you feel excited and giddy. Whatever life stage you're in, these feelings are always valid. The magic lies in sharing this openly. *Red*'s literary editor, Sarra Manning, regularly posts about her Harry Styles crush on Instagram. One of my friends adores Zendaya, while another sends GIFs of Regé-Jean Page licking a spoon in *Bridgerton*. Giggling at this content feels like swapping notes in the back of a classroom.

To truly enjoy your celebrity crush, you must shed expectations of what makes you cool or respectable. Often, we think that our passions and interests should be productive or useful. Obsession for obsession's sake isn't silly, or a waste of time. It's an undadulterated joy that keeps us engaged and connected to who we really are. One friend told me that seeing Catherine Zeta-Jones in *Zorro* made her realise she was into women. Our fascinations can reveal so much about ourselves.

So, what does Austin Butler tell me about myself? That I have great taste, I guess. I'm sure I'll find a new obsession soon, and Butler will join the tapestry of crushes I carry through life; the memories that take me back to a certain time or place. Whoever it is, I know I'll learn their entire life story and send my friends pictures of them until they tell me to stop. For now, I'll just watch *Elvis* one more time. *@ariellenaomisteele*

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY, GETTY

Written from the heart

From the moment they met, novelists Ayọ̀bámi Adébáyọ̀ and Emmanuel Iduma expressed their feelings in handwritten letters to each other. Now married, Adébáyọ̀ reveals why they've chosen to share their deepest declarations of love with the world

My friendship with Emmanuel began when we were teenagers in Nigeria, premised on our shared love for literature and a desire to become writers. It was a special relationship from the beginning; I found in him someone who understood and shared my creative obsessions and dreams. We started out as friends and quickly became collaborators and intellectual companions. As undergraduates, we organised writing workshops and invited older writers to facilitate. We quoted poetry to each other as we walked around on campus. We talked for hours about the books we read and the ones we hoped to write someday.

After university, we both left Nigeria. He went to study art writing in New York and I to Norwich to study creative writing. We remained close and continued to share stories, poems and books-in-progress, detailing our admiration and critique of each other's work and treasuring the honesty we could count on. We texted, emailed, and DMed. We collaborated on projects, laughed over misadventures, talked through heartbreak and grief. Now and then, we would meet up in person – when we both happened to be in Nigeria, whenever I was in the US or when he visited the UK.

Then Emmanuel wrote me a letter that crystallised everything between us. At the time, I was living in Lagos again and, though he was still in New York, we texted every day and spoke on the phone almost every other day. I read the letter several times on the day it arrived, and the form – that choice of an actual letter instead of a text, an email or a phone call – imbued its content with gravity. The words were vulnerable and true. The letter was partly an account of how Emmanuel had realised he was in love with me, partly a question about my own emotions about him. It clarified and shifted into focus all the tenderness and passion between us. Soon, I was writing my own letter in response to tell him I was in love with him, too.

We met up in New York a couple of months after we began dating. It was an opportunity to test the fitness of our instincts and to reflect on the past with the present in view. We kept a joint diary for two weeks, taking turns to detail the things we did together each day and to think on the page about moments in our 12-year-long friendship when the depth of affection or connection we felt had startled either or both of us. Moments that had gone unacknowledged, even when mutually recognised.

Our 2021 birthdays were the first we would celebrate as a married couple. We had been married for several months by then. In that time, we had established a tradition of marking significant moments with handwritten letters. To mark our birthdays, we wrote and shared letters on our Instagram pages, some of which were excerpted from the joint diary we'd kept…

> *'Emmanuel wrote me a letter that crystallised everything between us'*

Dear @emmaiduma,

To attempt an estimation of how long I have loved you, I begin with that party in the park on your 20th birthday.

I remember how we stood apart by a brook, preoccupied with a discussion that mapped the landscape of our particular obsessions. I was strangely unconcerned about questions of propriety. It was your party and I had you to myself, metres away from your guests. Yet, you did not seem restless to mingle with other friends who had come to celebrate you.

We had been companions for three years already when you turned 20. In that time, bound by our aspirations, we had organised three writing workshops. I wonder now at our audacity. How within months of meeting each other, we ran the first workshop as teenagers. In your company I had become bolder, my ambitions more probable because you shared them, too.

Perhaps it was not so strange then, that as the party continued, I did not tell you to return to your guests. I wanted you with me because, even then, the words we shared echoed the sound of things to come.

Dear @ayobamidebayo,

I should begin with how long I've loved you, to what extent, and with what intensity.

Throughout the weeks we attended rehearsals as members of a choir, there were initial encounters. But none was as decisive as when, sitting alone at the back of the theatre on the last day of the music festival, you said to me: 'I am also a writer.'

What I remember is nothing of what led us to speak about our private obsessions. What I remember is that I felt relieved of a secret – not because no one but you now knew I hoped to become a writer, but because no one until then had made me feel as precisely recognised.

From then on, life was grander. With you I knew to state my ambitions without inhibition; just as when, weeks after our chat at the theatre, I brought to you a floppy disk containing the manuscript of a novel. This was 2007. Fourteen years have passed in swathes of companionship, broader than we first imagined. And I shudder in amusement to think of how I was then, gangly and shy in front of you, our future unknown to me except as the whisper of a plea: 'Stay with me.'

Their letters have both defined and recorded the couple's relationship

Dear @ayobamidebayo,

In the first month, when the reverb of our vows had yet to still into a steady hum, I often woke with a rush of astonishment. It was becoming habitual to mutter 'my wife' when I thought of you; the welcome finality of those words. The language of my desire, as well as its appeal, had been transformed.

And now, several months later, it is as if, with you, marriage is a marvellous sequence of clarifying moments.

Do you recall how we danced at our wedding? We had forgotten to finalise on a song, after weeks of worrying the question. We settled without fuss on Patrick Watson's *Sit Down Beside Me*. I remember the clumsiness of our moves when, midway through, the tempo quickened and dragged for nearly the remainder of the song. I wondered how the guests appraised the song and our response to it. I shunned the thought as soon as I could. Then we found our rhythm, or better to say we made our beat – the croon in my voice as I leaned closer, your tender sway.

Dear @ayobamidebayo,

A final note, at least for now:
Two years ago, I made a copy of your photograph and wrote the following around its edges: 'I am interested in seeing my eyes only when they look at you.' It's a quote from Barthes' eccentric autobiography, and I like that it says as much about my need to look at you as it does about how often I do that.

(It's your birthday today, so permit me this repetition: I am interested in seeing my eyes only when they look at you.)

What I long for, throughout the unbroken length of our days, is the pleasure of looking at your face. Maybe that sounds mawkish, but I'll withdraw no sentiment from these declarations.

How within your beauty shall my desire hold a plea?

Dear @emmaiduma,

Once, I sent you a note that included this line from James Salter: 'The sum of small acts begins to unite them, the pure calculus of love.'

This is what I recall of our first dance as a married couple. Confetti swirled around us as our family cheered and photographers pleaded with us to look their way. The excitement was disorienting. Then you stroked my cheeks and whispered into my ear. 'Don't worry about that,' you said, 'it's just you and me.' Your voice was a steadying embrace that drew me into the pleasure of your presence.

Through 14 years of companionship, you have been my friend, lover, partner, brotherman. One designation looping into the other, each word insufficient to capture all you are to me. And now, in addition, this wondrous culmination – husband.

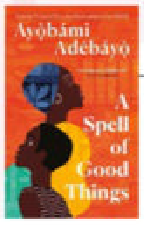
Dear @emmaiduma,

For your birthday today, this quote from a Cavafy poem: 'And, for me, the whole of you has been transformed into feeling.'

Another park, a different country. There was no party this time, but, after spending the day together, we were to attend an event. Do you remember how we lost our way? We were almost late, and yet the hour pulsed with potential instead of anxiety.

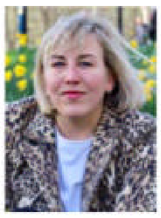
We spoke of other things as we wandered through the park, our misadventure cushioned by the comfort of each other's presence. You gave me your cap when the wind pulled at my hair and for the briefest of moments, your hand touched mine. That touch, a spark, the first flicker of desire.

I want your hand in mine, now, as always, for all the moments when words would not be enough.



A Spell Of Good Things (Canongate) by Ayọ̀bámi Adébáyọ̀ is out 9th February. I Am Still With You (William Collins) by Emmanuel Iduma is out 16th February

THE ONLINE INFLUENCER



HERE'S WHAT *RED* ACTING DIGITAL EDITOR ZLATA RODIONOVA IS LOVING AT REDONLINE.CO.UK THIS MONTH

FIND YOUR NEW YOGA MAT

From sling-over-your-shoulder mats to the best for hot yoga, we've tested them all

RIXO'S HOMEWARE COLLECTION

Our picks, from monochrome throws to printed vases

CERAMIC VASE, £125, Rixo

JUMPER, £270, Perfect Moment

GOGGLES, £153, Oakley. SKI SUIT, £789, Goldbergh at Selfridges

STYLISH SKI WEAR

Style meets practicality thanks to brands such as Perfect Moment, Oakley and Goldbergh

FACE OILS FOR EVERY SKIN AND BUDGET

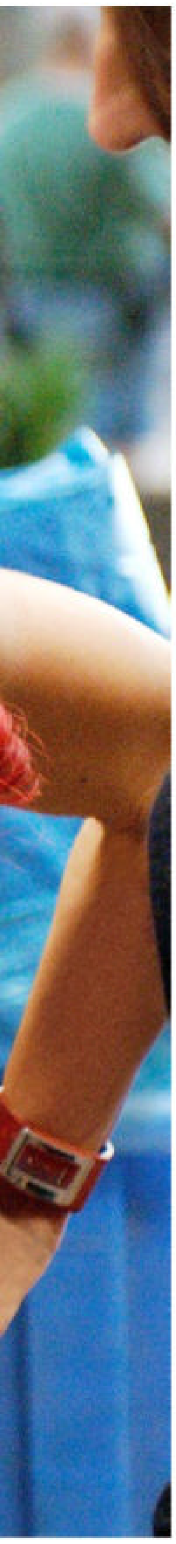
The best products to give your skin a glow-up

PHOTOGRAPHY: TONY KIM, CHRIS CRAYMER

Field on set with Meryl Streep in The Devil Wears Prada

'Getting dressed should be a

From styling *Sex And The City*'s fashionable foursome to bringing back the beret in Netflix's *Emily In Paris*, costume designer Patricia Field is a legend in her own right. As she releases her memoir, she tells Ella Dove why optimism is the key to style success



When preparing to meet Patricia Field – the woman behind the wardrobes of some of our most iconic screen characters – one question arises above all others: what on earth should I wear? After much deliberation, I opt for my boldest knitted turquoise cardigan lined with purple faux fur and woven strands of silver glitter, which I stumbled upon in a vintage shop – and I'm relieved to find that Field approves. 'That's cute,' she says, surveying me via Zoom from the office of her New York fashion gallery. 'Vintage shopping can be more interesting.'

Field's own outfit, of course, deserves a special mention: a loose black Karl Lagerfeld T-shirt paired with black leather-look arm-warmer sleeves. 'My closet is a collection of what my eyes have seen through the years,' she says. 'These T-shirts were given out when I did a project for a big chain store. I still wear it because it was a special gift that was never commercialised – and I value that.' Does she feel pressure to always look fashionable, I wonder? 'I don't feel that people expect me to look a certain way and I would refuse to conform anyway. I have to satisfy my heart,' she replies.

creative experience'

With her bright red hair tumbling across her shoulders and her eclectic style, it's hard to believe that Field is 81. Her distinguished career spans five decades, from the days when she ran her famous Patricia Field boutique in New York to her success as a costume designer for film and TV. The many highs and lows are encapsulated in her upcoming memoir, *Pat In The City* – from choosing Sarah Jessica Parker's Manolo Blahniks in the sales for *Sex And The City* to creating the perfect red beret for Lily Collins in Netflix's *Emily In Paris*. 'It was important to me that the book be in my vernacular,' she reflects. 'I'm very down-to-earth and very direct at the same time, so I didn't want it to sound snobby. I think we've achieved that.'

Down-to-earth she certainly is. She recalls her most cherished childhood outfit – 'a cowgirl set, which came complete with the boots, the pistol and the hat' – and credits her mother, who ran a dry-cleaning business for wealthy clients on the Upper East Side in Manhattan, as the driving influence behind her success. 'I learned independence from her,' she says. 'We lost my father [to tuberculosis] when I was about seven, so it became very important in my upbringing to be around strong women. I had my mum, my grandmother and four aunties who played a big role in my life. They used to take me out shopping and then for lunch in a Chinese restaurant,' she recalls.

After gaining a degree in Liberal Arts at New York University, Field answered a classified ad from Alexander's department stores and got a managerial job in the accessories department, later moving to the blouse department. 'One day, the management came down to my department because they wanted to see why the sales numbers were going up,' she remembers. 'The blouses had all been wrapped in plastic, but I'd bought these bust forms, pressed the blouses, displayed them and people were buying them. So I said to them, "Give me more real estate on your floor so I can keep doing better" – and I got it,' she smiles.

At the age of 24, Field opened her first shop, a 30 x 12ft boutique called Pants Pub, on the campus of NYU with her then-girlfriend, Jo Ann Salvucci (her first flagship store, Patricia Field on 8th Street, came five years later). 'It was a natural progression for me,' she says. 'I knew a street that I could afford the rent on, but where the girls were going from building to building, so there was a traffic there that wasn't obvious to the commercial world. That enabled me to start my own business.'

'I had this cast of very colourful characters working there, because if someone came in looking for a job, I'd look them up and down and if they looked like they knew how to put themselves together, I assumed they could put a customer together, too. So I'd give them a shot – that really helped to define my shop.'

A few years later came the call that changed everything – from *Vogue*'s former creative director, Candy Pratts Price, who was then a shop-window display artist. Field remembers it word for word. 'She said, "Hi Pat, I'm in Pittsburgh working on this movie called *Lady Beware* with Diane Lane, and the director asked me if I knew somebody who could do the costumes. I told her about you and she said to hire you." Well, I had never worked on a movie before!' she laughs. 'But it was a creative change and I just fell right into it.'

Needless to say, Field hit the ground running, going on to work on a plethora of hit films and TV shows, including, of course, *Sex And The City*. She says she loved dressing all four of its lead actors, but it was a particular highlight to work with Sarah Jessica Parker. 'She was perfect because she understood fashion, so we could do things that maybe you couldn't do with all women,' she says. 'She got it, she liked it and she also contributed to it. She was a fashion girl – so Carrie was also a fashion girl.'

Of the now-iconic tutu in the show's opening credits, she notes, 'I found it in this showroom in a basket and it was $5,' she recalls. 'I felt secure knowing Sarah Jessica was imaginative with fashion. She didn't have any barriers. I remember saying to the producers and the director, "If this show is a hit, then this look will not die because it's original." In the end, that tutu was framed in one of the producers' offices.'

Field had no inkling at the time that *Sex And The City* would become such a cult hit. 'To me, it was another creative job,' she muses, although 'It made fashion on TV a thing.' She adds: 'It was the same with *The Devil Wears Prada* [for which Field received an Oscar nomination for Best Costume Design]. It got so much acclaim and I was happy, of course, but I was also kind of surprised. I did my best, I liked what I was doing. But I wasn't going, "Here we go, Academy Award nomination" – my mind wasn't there. My mind was on my work.'

Did she ever regret any of the *SATC* looks she pulled together? 'There was one,' she smiles. 'I still think about it to this day. It was on Sarah Jessica again – she had a short top on and a skirt and I put a belt on her bare midriff. And when I did that, I was thinking, "Am I pushing this too far?" I felt maybe I was being too obvious.'

'I don't think fashion is given enough credit as an art form'

As for negative criticism from others, Field doesn't have the headspace for it. 'I can't be anybody but me, and if I lose track of who I am, then I've lost everything. Look, if I can't explain my choices, I stay away from them.' She pauses. 'But that belt... Actually, I think they did something similar with Sarah Jessica for *And Just Like That...*'

Field wasn't able to work on that spin-off series, as she was already committed to doing *Emily In Paris* ('Lily Collins was a joy, so professional and positive – one of my favourites I've ever worked with,' she beams). Another person who wasn't involved in *And Just Like That...* was Kim Cattrall, with whom Field has what she describes as 'an established and positive relationship'.

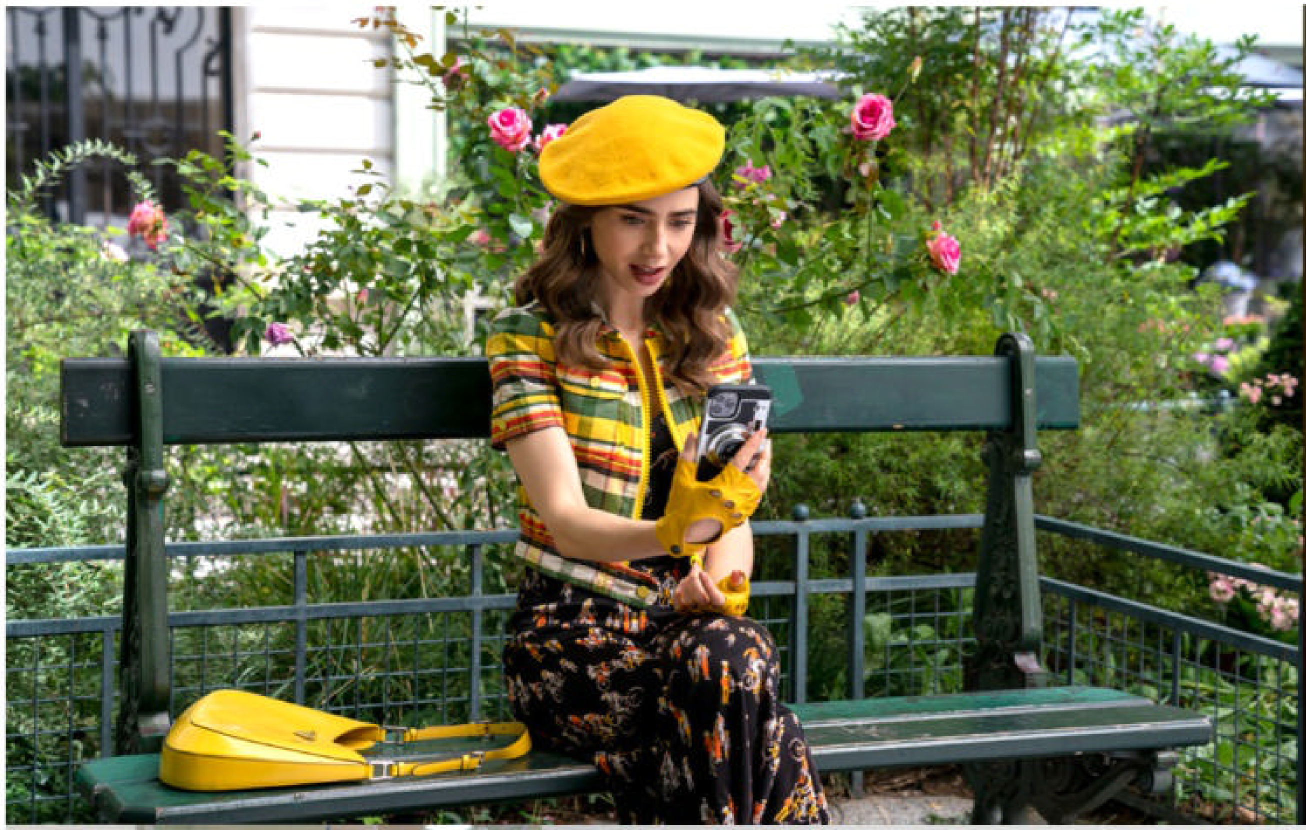
'I can understand why Kim wasn't sure about doing Samantha again,' she says. 'She wanted to move on, and she had the opportunity to do so.'

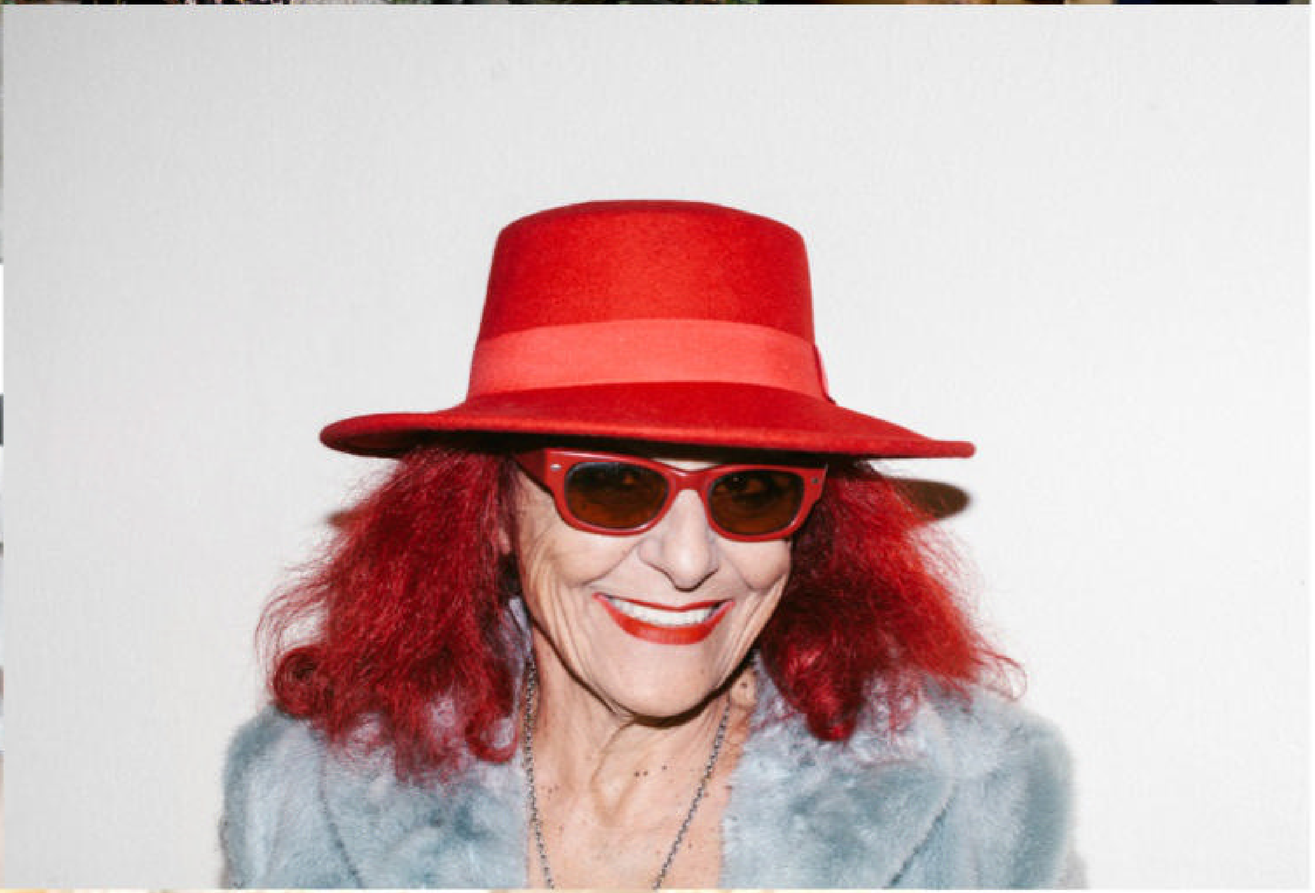
Field has continued to work with Cattrall, most recently on upcoming Netflix series *Glamorous*, which sees Cattrall play a former model who starts a cosmetics company. 'I'm maybe a little bit pickier now with what I take on, because TV especially has become really demanding,' Field says. 'It's like, make it as cheaply as you can and it's 12 hours a day. But I did this project with Kim because of our relationship and she asked me to do it.'

Outside of her screen work, Field's career now largely revolves around her art gallery, Patricia Field ArtFashion Gallery, which she opened in 2018, having closed her shop two years prior. The space is entirely filled with original, made-to-order, handcrafted pieces by a select group of artists. 'My gallery is the perfect continuation of what I do, but at a different pace than a store with 15 employees,' she says. 'I love supporting the original work of young designers. I don't think fashion is given enough credit as an art form.'

As for the future of fashion? 'It's gearing up again after the pandemic,' she assures. 'But I prefer shopping in good consignment stores or vintage stores to big departments, because it's one of a kind and you can find so much joy. I think individual style is an expression of our beliefs and who we are. Mine is that I love optimism. Getting dressed should be an individually creative experience. If people understand that as a concept, they'll start to express their identity. That, to me, is the most important thing.' With that, I'm off to overhaul my wardrobe.

Pat In The City (Fourth Estate) by Patricia Field is out 14th February. To find out more about the Patricia Field ArtFashion Gallery, visit patriciafield.com





Field (centre right) with some of the iconic looks she has created for Emily In Paris, The Devil Wears Prada and Sex And The City

PHOTOGRAPHY: ALAMY, STÉPHANIE BRANCHU/NETFLIX, LAUREL GOLIO/REDUX/EYEVINE

Beach lovers

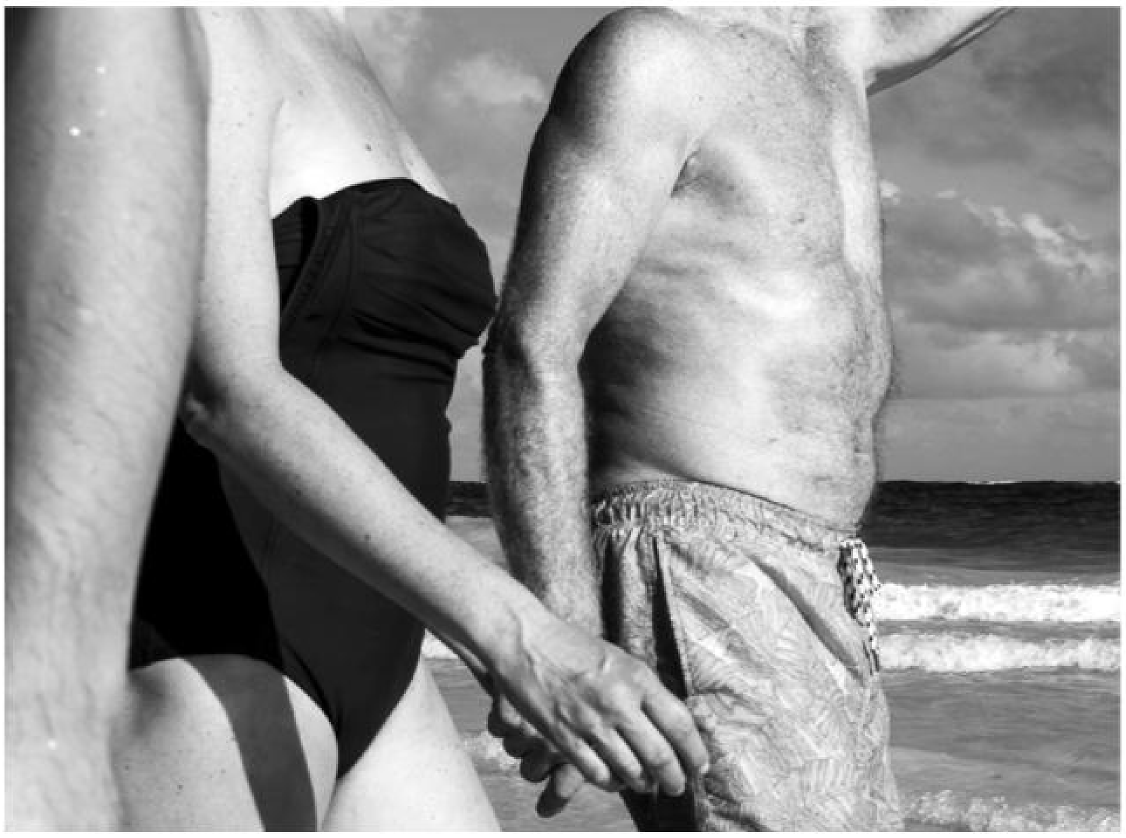
Captivated by couples on the beach, New York-based photographer Erica Reade started taking pictures, creating a collection of images that reveal lovers in their most intimate and carefree moments

Seven summers ago, as Erica Reade lay on the sands of Fort Tilden beach in Queens, New York, she found herself chancing on a moment between a man and woman beside her. 'I happened to look up from my towel as this couple were looking very entwined and sweaty and it just got me,' she remembers. 'She was asleep in his arms, he was reading, and I was just very intrigued by how suction-cupped they were despite it being so sticky and hot.'

Taking her camera out of her bag, Reade began capturing what would turn out to be the first image in a photo series (and subsequent book), *Beach Lovers*, created on the local beaches of the city – among her favourites were Coney Island, Rockaway, Fort Tilden and Jacob Riis Park. 'It started out as a happy accident, but as I took more pictures, I became kind of obsessed,' Reade laughs. 'Sometimes it was chance, sometimes I would go looking; either way, they were completely anonymous candid portraits. Most of the couples were 80-90% unrecognisable.'

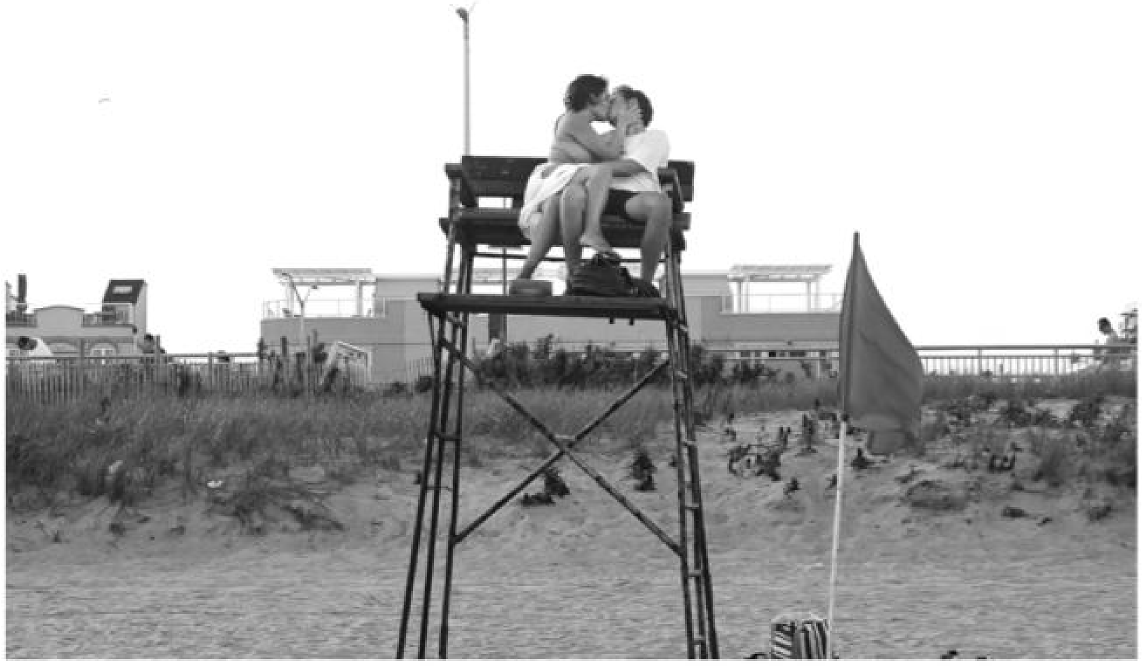
Over the long beach days that were to come, Reade took hundreds of images – some in subtle fashion, others not so

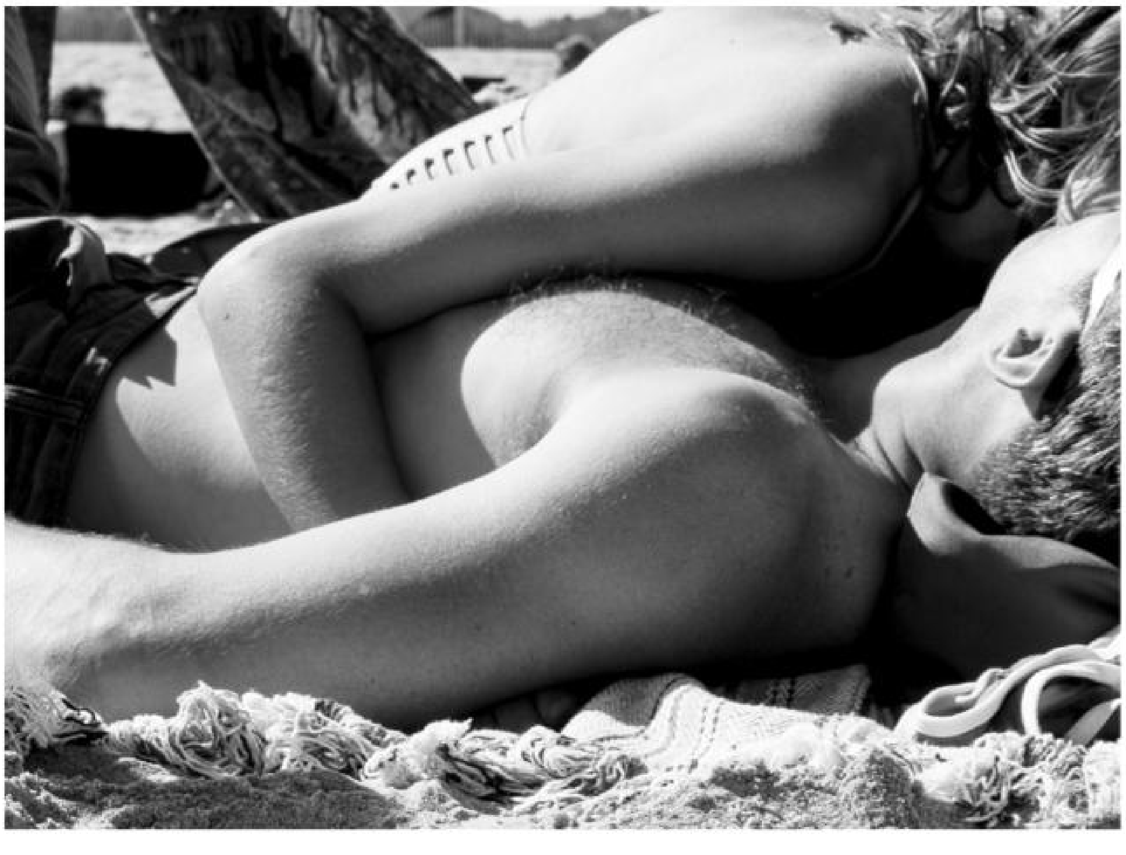
ABOVE 'This was taken one September and proof to me that summer wasn't over yet. I got very close to them, but if they noticed me they didn't care – or maybe they were too enrapt in their kiss!'



'I love the way that the sun and years on the beach are etched into their skin. I'm always interested in how our intimacies change as we get older – in my experience, the almost cliché "long walk on the beach" of older couples tends to ring true.'

'What a kiss. They were just very passionate. I think they were late 20s. Things go out the window at the beach, and they were having quite the makeout session.'





'It was almost too easy: it was a crowded beach day and they had put their towel quite close to ours. As I turned my camera towards them, their entwined bodies filled the frame.'

'I like to go to Coney Island in June because the excitement that summer has finally arrived is palpable, especially among the teenagers. This sweet pair looked like a first love, quietly chatting and looking at all the beachgoers.'

'They first caught my attention because he wasn't lying on a towel! I thought they were very cute – I loved that they were both reading at the same time.'

'Every time I thought I'd seen it all, I hadn't. They were dozing like this for quite some time, probably a good 20 to 30 minutes. There's definitely a slight humour in this one because it must have been so uncomfortable.'

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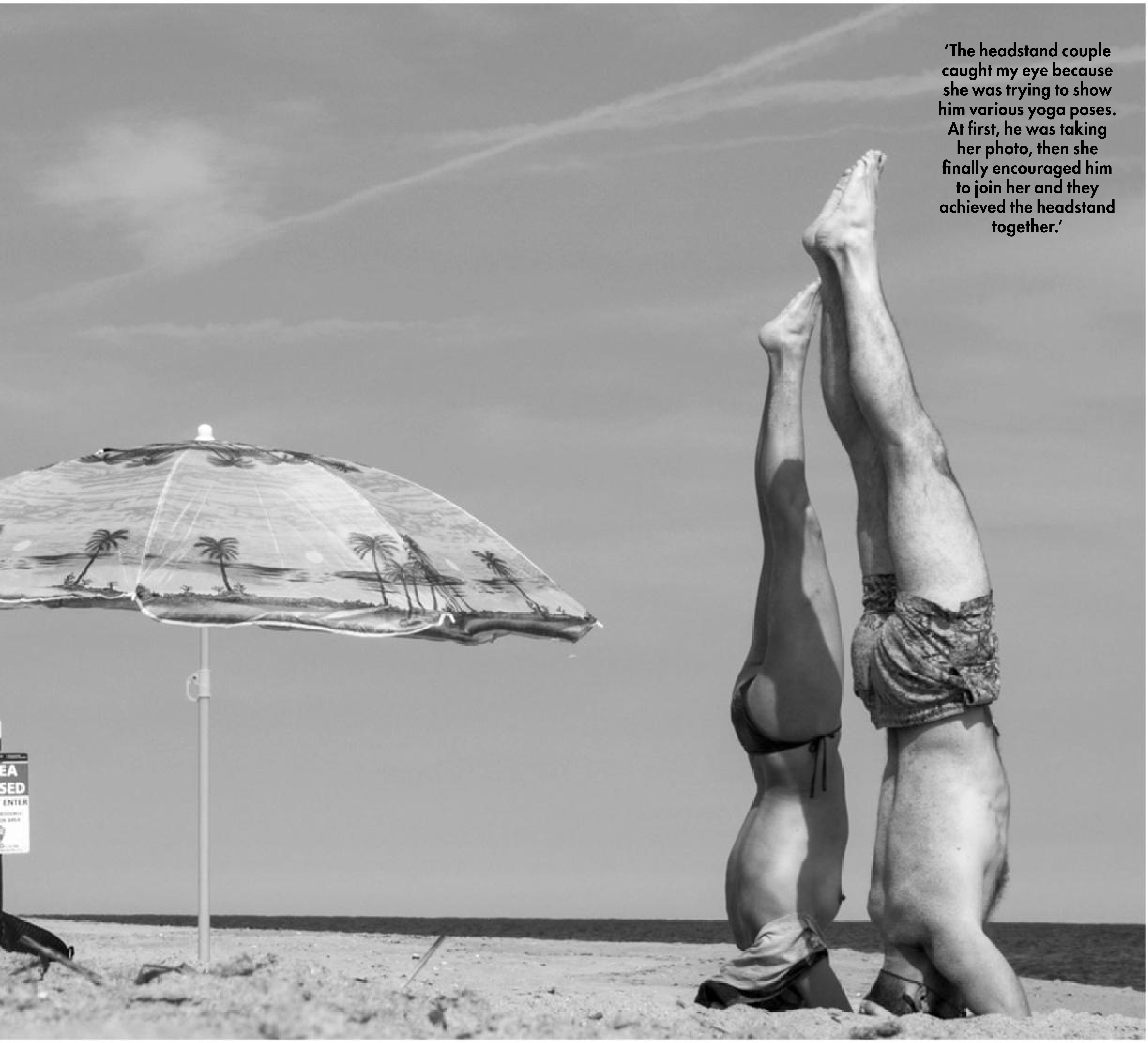


'The headstand couple caught my eye because she was trying to show him various yoga poses. At first, he was taking her photo, then she finally encouraged him to join her and they achieved the headstand together.'

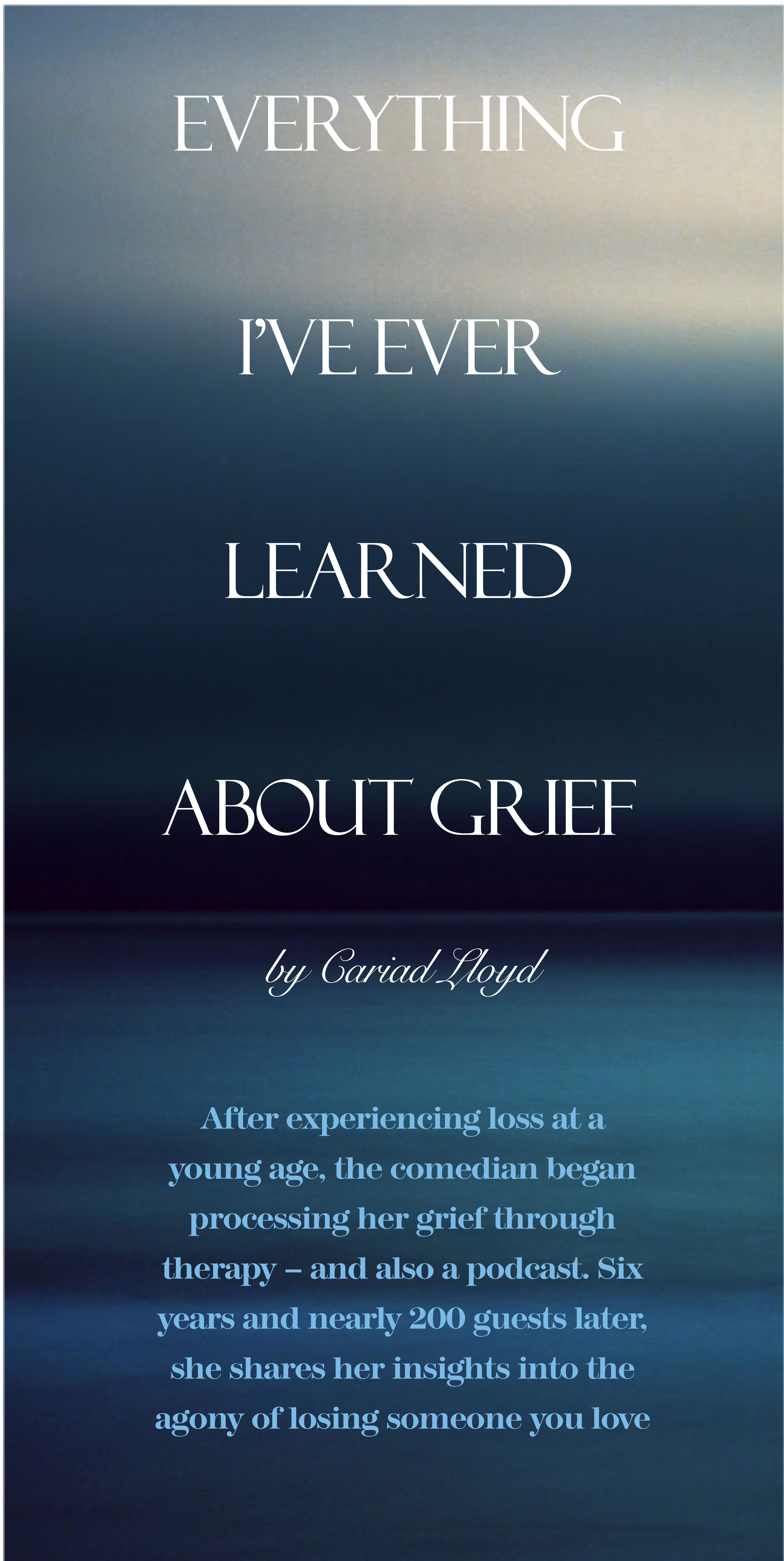
WORDS: MEGAN CONNER.
PHOTOGRAPHY: *BEACH LOVERS*/ ERICA READE

much. 'The great thing about New York is that each beach has a different community, so I found older couples, LGBTQ+ couples, people with kids… What was surprising was how few of them would notice me or seem to care that I was taking their picture,' she says. 'We have a lot of street photographers in New York, but I also think there's something about our behaviour that changes as soon as we get to the beach. Maybe we're more intimate because we're wearing less, but we're also more relaxed – more carefree.'

When Reade started shooting the series, she was in a relationship with an ex that was going badly. 'I don't think I ever wanted to admit that this was about me, but a big motivation was that it gave me hope,' she says. 'I always seemed to be alone at the beach, and seeing these really lovely moments happen with people of all ages and backgrounds was affirming. I wanted that.'

Last summer, she went to the beach with her new love. 'Going back with someone special has been really nice,' she smiles. Although she's not sure it's the end of *Beach Lovers* just yet: 'I don't know that I'll have full closure until I've stopped finding new expressions. And even then, maybe I'll be 75 on the beach and signalling for someone to pass me the camera!'

Beach Lovers (Daylight Books) by Erica Reade is out now



EVERYTHING I'VE EVER LEARNED ABOUT GRIEF

by Cariad Lloyd

After experiencing loss at a young age, the comedian began processing her grief through therapy – and also a podcast. Six years and nearly 200 guests later, she shares her insights into the agony of losing someone you love

My dad died when I was 15. Not an extraordinary sentence by any means. Not even close to, 'I sleepwalked and woke up on top of Mount Everest,' or, 'I married a man who turned out to be a cocker spaniel in chinos and a jumper.' Just a short, harmless sentence I have been carrying with me for more than 20 years; that, if prised open, reveals a chasm in my life, a rip in my timeline where a bomb once exploded.

I have said it so many times, it has been shaped into a neat, hard statement, a diamond formed under the pressure of my own sadness. I can say it now without fear I'll start sobbing. Time doesn't heal, but it does allow you to make choices about how you present your pain. And so, 'My dad died when I was 15,' has become more than a sentence; it has become a way to manage my grief-mess.

It's hard to sum up a person dying and then very slowly fading from your life. My dad was a person alive with noise; not chatty exactly, but one of those people who would cough and breathe and sigh and THINK loudly. He liked Jean-Michel Jarre and Frank Zappa. He was obsessed with correct grammar, to the point that if you said, 'Tom and me,' he'd correct it to, 'Tom and I' (and did this often by bellowing 'AND I' while you were in the middle of talking). He liked watching the Tour de France and opera. He could clear a lift with his farts.

In 1998, he died of pancreatic cancer. It had already spread to his liver by the time the starting point was discovered. As it spread, he turned more yellow, like the cancer had coloured him in with a felt-tip pen. He was diagnosed in February and by April he was dead. And so, I got to 'the grief club' early. I put out some nibbles, pushed the chairs back. I made some space for all the others I knew would eventually join me with their own grief-messes.

Eighteen years later, in 2016, I began my podcast, the *Griefcast*. My intention was to have honest chats with other members of the club – fellow comedians, actors, writers. Six years on, I've interviewed nearly 200 guests, written a book and learned that it isn't just me who needs to address the weird, messy process of grief. With close to 10m downloads, *Griefcast* shows the club is not just full, it's rammed. As alone as grief makes you feel, it's the biggest club we have, something we will all experience one day. Through the years of recording episodes with Griefsters (as we call them) I've talked about the loss of parents, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles, children, babies, pregnancies, friends, pets and just those who are loved and missed. I've learned there is so much to be shared in the grief club, but I've also learned how unique each grief is.

I've learned that no one will ever truly know another person's loss and the pain it has brought, but there is a use in walking alongside one another and saying, 'I'm here, I'm listening. I want to hear their name.' The isolation grief delivers can be eased by talking, by knowing someone else has walked this path before you. I hope that by sharing what I've learned from all these years in the club and all these conversations that I can assure you, whatever you are feeling, you are not alone.

Start by banishing the grief guilt

One of the most common reactions I hear about from Griefsters is the fear they're doing grief 'wrong'. Worrying that they're too sad, or not sad enough, or they should have 'moved on'. Writer Poorna Bell, whose husband died in 2015, recalled how this pressure had come from others as well as herself, and described how some friends would suggest she should be 'over it' by now. Many people I spoke to had simultaneously tried to rush their grief, feeling that after a few years they should be 'done'. The timescale for grief is on a par with moss growing; it's not the speed of the internet. My experience of grief is that it has got easier, and it has got better, but not in a linear way: it has gone backwards and forwards and sideways and knocked me over more times than I can remember. Never feel bad for how your grief behaves. If you are still sad years later, that's okay.

Find other ways to keep them present

However long ago or recent your grief was, there's a very real fear that you will forget them. When I spoke to Rev Richard Coles on *Griefcast*, he described the fear that his memories of David, his late husband, would fade away. This was another loss – not just of the person but of the memory of their voice, their walk. While there are many ways to keep our loved ones present in our new digital world – from photos on a phone screen to saving voice notes they sent – if, like me, you're an analogue griever (i.e. my dad died before the internet was the world we lived in), keeping a fragment of them present can help, for when you want to remember. Whether that's in letters squirrelled away or real-life objects they gave you, in doing so, you are allowing them to be a part of your life now.

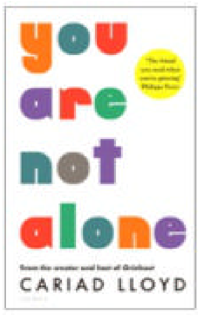
'YOU WILL BE FOREVER CHANGED BY GRIEF'

Everything will be the same but different

You will be forever changed by grief. You will look the same, smile the same, wear the same clothes and drink and eat and live and get the bus and scroll on your phone, but once you walk through the door to the club and truly know what 'gone for ever' means, a part of you is, and always will be, changed. When I spoke to writer Marian Keyes, she told me that grief rearranges reality. You can't go back to the way it was before and that used to scare me, but now I hold on to that truth. Even if you didn't get on or hadn't spoken for years, the fact someone who was a part of your life is no longer here changes you.

Don't fear 'the fire'

After speaking to so many Griefsters on the podcast, patterns began to emerge. One of the things lots of us could relate to was 'the fire', which is a feeling of being untouchable after a loss. When you feel 'the fire', you feel liberated from caring about what anyone thinks of your actions. Actor and writer Robert Webb's mum died of breast cancer when he was 17 and he remembered how he couldn't really imagine something worse happening to him than his mum disappearing. He described using that fire in his determination to go to Cambridge, as if after this great loss, nothing would stop him. Others spoke of not caring what anyone thought any more or the ability to see past the 'small stuff' and stand back and see life as a whole. When you have seen the end of someone's journey, you see how limited all our time is. This can give you a freedom or a lightness to not play by the rules that society expects of you. It doesn't mean you're happy they're dead, but it is a strange gift after loss. When we all admitted this to one another, the guilt we felt dissipated.



You Are Not Alone (Bloomsbury Tonic) by Cariad Lloyd is out now

Ask, 'Who were you then?'

Who were you when grief arrived? What was shaping you at that point? Whether you had just moved out of home, become pregnant, were a teenager or hadn't spoken with that person for years, can you acknowledge that you were in this specific space when grief crashed in? We all have Venn diagrams we can share with one another. I am in the TGC (teenage grief club). I am in the pancreatic cancer room, in the 'quick death after diagnosis' cancer section (which is next to the 'more time but slow deterioration' room). We have many new rooms now – a Covid-19 room, a room of death during a pandemic, a room of quarantine grief, a room where rituals and goodbyes were distanced, masked and FaceTimed. If we can understand the specifics of some of these rooms and their dimensions, joys and limitations, we can better understand our own grief.

Don't discount therapy

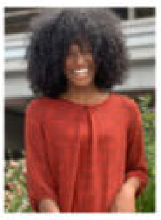
Therapy isn't for everyone, but it changed me, helped me and, if I'm honest, I think it saved me. I began seeing a therapist around the time I started *Griefcast*, after avoiding it for many years and making a few failed attempts with different therapists. My biggest fear, and the reason I had avoided it for so long, was what would happen once I started talking to someone. Once we opened that box, what then? I was frightened of myself, of my grief. When I finally felt ready to talk, finding someone was much easier than I had thought and, in going to therapy, I learned how to open the box and then close it again each week. Therapy is a very personal (and privileged) choice and not the only one available. There are many ways to listen to your grief, whether that's journalling, self-help books or listening to podcasts – or the most ancient way of all: having a cup of tea with someone who cares enough to listen and say their name with you.

The waves still crash – they just get further apart

As an old hand at the grief game, you may think I'd get better at dodging the grief waves by now, but it took a long time to realise that you can't stop them. They come at will, when they feel like it, and the only way to not let them knock you over is to let them pass you. Actor and writer Stephen Mangan had a useful way of describing it: 'There's no right, there's no wrong, you're never going to beat it, you just have to take it one step at a time.' I've got better at keeping my stance steady, shoving my feet into the sand to keep myself upright, knowing it will not last for ever. The waves will come in different frequencies: at the beginning, it can feel like they crash every hour. Now, 20-plus years on, I may get one every few years or so. Trust or believe your grief will become a calm sea eventually, because it does. It just does.

PHOTOGRAPHY: MATT CROCKETT, GETTY

THE ECO INFLUENCER



OUR COLUMNIST ARMELLE FERGUSON SHARES GREEN WAYS TO FIND JOY THIS MONTH

RETHINKING ROSES

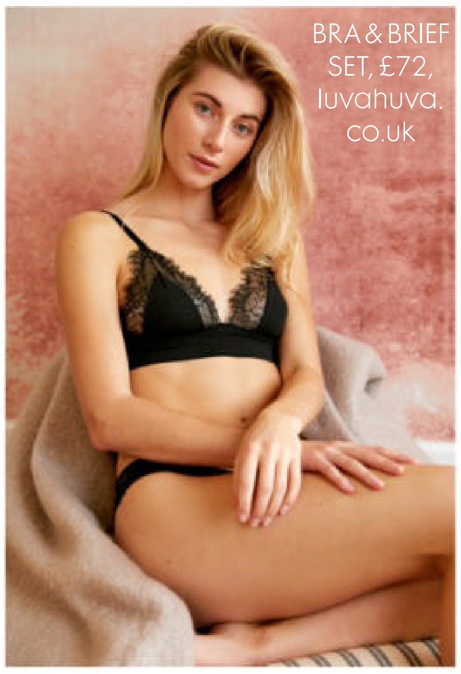
Roses are a staple of the season of love, but large-scale harvesting and energy-intensive importing mean some aspects of the rose industry can have a harmful impact on our planet. Dried flowers have a rustic, romantic aesthetic and last for much longer. The soft pink and purple tones of BloomPost's French Kiss Deluxe bouquet are perfect for Valentine's day, and I can continue to enjoy their beauty all year round.

FRENCH KISS DELUXE BOUQUET, £44.95, BloomPost

PITAYA PASSION CHOCOLATE, from £8.95, Simsanté

SOMETHING SWEET

Chocolate tastes even better when I'm supporting a brand that uses high-quality cocoa beans and avoids disrupting local ecosystems. For all chocolate lovers, Simsanté's Pitaya Passion is a must-try: I love the tropical notes of pitaya (an exotic fruit also known as dragon fruit or strawberry pear), which blend perfectly with the depth of the dark chocolate.



BRA & BRIEF SET, £72, luvahuva.co.uk

PLANET-FRIENDLY PANTS

When it comes to sustainable clothing, underwear is a really hard category to nail. Secondhand lingerie doesn't feel right, sewing it myself is way too intricate, and fabric choices for such intimate garments need to be on point. So I was very pleased to find Luva Huva, which has committed to keeping waste to a minimum, and carefully considers every step of its sourcing, production and manufacturing process.

KEEPING IT BUBBLY

I'm always on the lookout for grown-up soft drinks and have recently landed on Oddbird's non-alcoholic Spumante, straight from Italy's Prosecco region. Its notes of white pear and citrus offer a soft, yet voluptuous feel, and the wine-making process is done with minimal processing, no added E-substances and a respect for the natural processes of fermentation, making it kinder to the environment.

ODDBIRD ALCOHOL-FREE SPUMANTE, £10, Harvey Nichols

soap folk
lavender
pukka
night time

LAVENDER LOVE

My latest go-to for presents is The Natural Gift Company. Its Ultimate Lavender Natural Gift Set includes a plant wax candle, two bath melts, a hand cream and handmade lavender & oatmilk soap bar. Suitable for vegans, it comes in beautiful recycled packaging.

ULTIMATE LAVENDER NATURAL GIFT SET, £26, thenaturalgiftcompany.co.uk

ALL YOU NEED IS. . .

Love is something we all yearn for, but how can we manifest it in life? Author, podcaster and former monk Jay Shetty has drawn on wisdom from ancient Hindu texts to create a four-step process that allows us all to find and keep love, whatever our situation

If you type the words ‘when will I find’ into Google, you’ll discover the most commonly searched-for final part of this sentence is ‘love’. This one little word holds myriad definitions: familial love, romantic love, universal love, self-love. Whatever form it takes, love is a fundamental part of the human experience.

In his new book, *8 Rules Of Love*, Jay Shetty, author, podcaster, life coach and former monk, examines this most complex and powerful of human emotions. He draws from Hindu texts called the Vedas, which he has studied extensively since he spent three years living as a Hindu monk near Mumbai in his early 20s. During this time, he would meditate for four to eight hours a day, and spend many hours poring over Vedic texts. ‘When I saw the practical and accessible wisdom hidden within them, I started sharing these messages and insights with the world,’ he says.

Thirteen years on, Shetty’s viral videos have gathered more than 4bn views and Shetty himself a global following of millions. Now 35, he lives with wife Radhi in Los Angeles and has used his learnings to carve out success as the host of his podcast, *On Purpose*, and as author of the 2020 bestselling book, *Think Like A Monk*. To date, he has trained and certified more than 2,000 other life coaches in a curriculum he developed, which is also rooted in Vedic principles.

‘The Vedas introduced me to the fundamental idea that love has stages, or ashrams,’ he explains. ‘As I worked with individuals and couples on their relationships and transitions into and out of love, I saw that the validity of these concepts stands the test of real-life settings.’ Here, Shetty shares the wisdom he has found – and tells us how to apply it to modern relationships.

THE FIRST ASHRAM

Preparing for love

The first ashram, Brahmacharya, teaches us to prepare for love by learning how to love ourselves in solitude. Alone, we can acquire skills such as compassion, empathy and patience, all of which prepare us to share love. So often, our worst decisions are made when we don’t like where we are – which is why people who feel lonely or desperate are more likely to settle for the wrong partner. Solitude is about taking time for ourselves to do the work internally, figuring out what we want and need, so that we can communicate this effectively to others.

It can be helpful to do an exercise called a ‘solo audit’. First, I would recommend spending a week keeping track of the time you spend alone. Then, for the next month, start doing one new activity alone every week. At the end of the audit, you will be familiar with your own preferences without leaning on someone else’s priorities or goals.

The texts also ask us to consider what love means to us. For instance, one person could say, ‘I love you,’ and mean they want to spend their life with you, while another could say it and mean they want to spend a night with you.

When you say, ‘I love you,’ you’re committing to your own definition of the word. So, try these three questions: first, how do I want to feel in love? Second: what is *not* love to me? And third: which of these perceptions are truly mine, and which ones have I adopted from society? So often, we think about what we want from the other person but neglect to consider how we want to feel ourselves.

THE SECOND ASHRAM

Practising love

The second ashram, Grhastha, focuses on extending our love to others while still loving ourselves. The texts explain how to understand, appreciate and co-operate with another person's thoughts, beliefs and preferences. The earlier you learn about someone's values and goals, the quicker you can make decisions that are right for you, or have conversations that are difficult upfront but will make life easier later on. Respecting that person's values means you don't want them to change, nor are you forcing them to value what you value equally.

If we take the example of my own life, my first love is my purpose – my work and service. My wife's is her family. We had some really uncomfortable conversations at the beginning of our relationship about this, and we had to be okay with the fact that we will be apart sometimes because we've chosen to do the things we love. But we also know that we need to come together sometimes and strike a balance.

A great way to build and maintain excitement and intimacy in a long-term relationship is by using a framework called 'the four Es'. At the very base of that journey is enjoying 'entertainment' together – watching TV is great, but it's surface level and not where your connection should end. A level up from that is 'experiments and experiences', when couples do something that they're both novices at, to allow them an opportunity to find out something new about each other. A step further is the third E, 'education' – going on a course together or learning independently and coming together to discuss it and build connection. And finally, the highest form of intimacy is 'engagement' – serving together. This could be doing charity work or running a marathon; something tough and meaningful that requires you to support each other. If you work through it, this framework allows you to set goals together to strengthen your connection. So often in our relationships, we tick the boxes – settling down, often marriage, kids – but relationships flourish best if we keep growing them.

THE THIRD ASHRAM

Protecting love

Vanaprastha, the third ashram, is a healing place where we can retreat to seek peace and learn how to resolve conflict. Many of us believe in a fairy tale in which a great relationship is one that has no disagreements, but as you try to love someone, there will be wounds or times when you feel hurt. If you prepare for conflict, you'll be able navigate it better when you do find yourself in that high-pressure place.

Vanaprastha teaches us to approach conflict as a team. The most valuable tool for this is working out what your partner's fight style is. Most people can identify with one of these three: venting ('I want to talk about it right now'), hiding ('I need some time out to gather my thoughts') and exploding (every emotion coming out, in a way that you feel it immediately). In my own relationship, I am a venter, whereas my wife is a hider, and in the early days, when she disappeared mid-argument, I was left feeling like she didn't care enough to sort things out. Now, by understanding how we're different, I know we need to compromise and set a time to come back to resolve things once she has had the space she needs. This way, we can have a healthier disagreement and protect our love.

AS TOLD TO: ELLA DOVE. PHOTOGRAPHY: MELANIE ACEVEDO/TRUNK ARCHIVE, IRINA OZHIGOVA/STOCKSY

‘TO RECEIVE LOVE, WE NEED TO SHOW IT’

THE FOURTH ASHRAM

Perfecting love

The final ashram, Sannyasa, is the epitome of love – extending our love to every person and every moment of our lives. Chances are, we spend a lot of the waking day with people who aren’t our partners – so why limit the love in our lives? Why not experience love, practise it and create it, instead of waiting for it to find you? I was once in an Uber and on my phone, and after about three minutes, I realised we hadn’t gone anywhere. When I asked the driver what was happening, he said, ‘I was just waiting for you to say hello.’ I was mortified, but it was also a great wake-up call. We often expect the barista to smile at us or the taxi driver to ask about our day, but the texts describe how, in order to receive love, we need to show it. The more you do this, the more you will experience the depths of love from different people. You can seek love for your whole life and never find it, or you can give love for your whole life and find joy.

Below is a useful exercise I like to use called Sharing Love Meditation:

1 Take a deep breath. And breathe out.

2 Take a moment to think about all the love you have received in your life.

3 Think about all the love you have expressed and shared with others.

4 Now, feel all the love within you, from every source, including yourself.

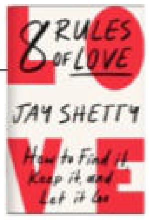
5 Bring your awareness to all the love you have chosen to have within you. Notice it in your heart. Feel it cascading across your body, enlivening your feet, legs, arms, chest and head.

6 Feel the love getting stronger and more powerful. Notice it radiating from your heart space. Now, see this love going out to the people you know and care for.

7 See it reaching out to every person who you know is struggling.

8 Now, feel it projected to people you’ve never met and the strangers you see every day.

9 Now, feel the love within you extending even beyond that, reaching every person in the entire world.



8 Rules Of Love: How To Find It, Keep It, And Let It Go (Harper Thorsons) by Jay Shetty is out 31st January

CAN YOU RENT OUT YOUR LIFE?

From clothes to pets, you can make money by loaning out almost anything you own, but Emily Cronin wonders whether it's worth the hassle

According to a recent survey, almost half of us own items that have only ever had one outing. Given these cash-strapped times, when energy prices, interest rates and the price of the weekly food shop are ever-rising, this seems kind of unacceptable, doesn't it? Thankfully, there's now a plethora of rental platforms that enable us to borrow one-off items that cater to our occasional needs and whims (that wedding outfit, the skiwear we would love to don on the slopes this season), so we don't have to buy stuff we don't need for the long-term. But what if we reversed the trick? What if we rented out the things that are sitting dormant at the back of our cupboards? How much could these forgotten items earn us?

Aside from helping out others and benefiting the planet, there's a lot to be said for making an income from stuff you already own (take the woman who pays her monthly childcare bill by renting out her clothes). But what is profitable? Your home, your knowledge, your garden mower? And how much effort goes into the equation before you get to a pot of cash that makes a difference? In answering this question, I set about exploring the parts of my life that might be rentable and how they could make me better off.

> 'THERE'S A LOT TO BE SAID FOR MAKING AN INCOME FROM STUFF YOU ALREADY OWN'

1

WARDROBE

As a former newspaper fashion editor, I've accumulated enough clothes to make my husband think I'm a hoarder (I'm not) and my toddler think my wardrobe is a shop. Now I'm a freelancer who works from home (less *Emily In Paris*, more Emily typing away in the underheated spare room), the reality is that those designer sample-sale pieces, press gifts and frothy treats don't get out as much as they used to. At the same time, I'm aware that dresses, no matter how dreamy, can only be worn one at a time, and so have terrible costs-per-wear. Last summer, I rented a dress from Rotaro for Royal Ascot, and a Loewe raffia bag from Hurr for a beachy wedding after that – but what if I offered my own occasionwear to the UK's £1.8bn rental market?

People who rent out their wardrobes stand to earn serious money, says Victoria Prew, co-founder and CEO of Hurr. She notes that a number of the peer-to-peer rental platform's top lenders have left employment to focus on loaning out their wares full-time, including a woman who made £37,000 last year (putting her two children through nursery in the process). On a smaller scale, lenders sometimes find that hot items pay for themselves. The owner of a Cult Gaia Eos clutch bag recouped her spend after the first four customers rented it out and has since loaned out the piece a further 39 times.

I'm already registered on Hurr, so I begin with a favourite dress of the season: a claret cotton Ulla Johnson number with puff sleeves and a ruffled hem. Based on the retail price of my dress, Hurr suggests that I could rent it out for £60 for four nights, with about £45 of that making it to my bank account (once you've taken out delivery and dry-cleaning costs).

The only problem is, that doesn't necessarily mean anyone will wish to rent it – in fact, at the time of writing, I've only loaned two dresses (one Ganni, one Rixo). While the first was rented to the customer with no problems, the other was returned, with the rental fee refunded through Hurr's 'fit policy' guarantee.

Startup costs: I have to buy the clothes in the first place – but then, I've already done that, haven't I?

Potential earnings: If business picks up and I rent, say, two pieces per month, I'll earn about £90 after commissions, shipping and dry-cleaning costs, or £1,080 a year. Not too shabby for clothes that are hanging in my closet, waiting to be taken out for a spin.

2

HOUSE

I've stayed in other people's cottages and flats on holidays, so why not rent out my house? I know a good number of people who already do – a friend of a friend lets out her seaside home for two weeks every summer, with the proceeds subsidising a family holiday; others use rental as a tool to maintain properties they view as their (eventual) forever homes.

Bianca Fincham, founder of PR agency Fincham Communications, spent three years renovating a Georgian house overlooking the sea in Cornwall. She and her family live in London and now rent out Pembroke Lodge to holidaymakers through Boutique Retreats. 'There are so many second homes in Cornwall that just sit there, empty,' she says. 'Renting the house supports our costs in London and I'm happy people get to enjoy it.'

To find out how my 1930s house in London would do on the short-term rental market, I call Joanna Drescher, global host operations manager for Kid & Coe, a family-centric platform. 'Aesthetically, your home would fit in really well with most of the other houses that we have on the site,' she says, explaining that the main things Kid & Coe looks for are properties in a central location, in excellent condition, with child-friendly amenities (high chairs, cots, trampolines…) and a bright, feel-good aesthetic. Clutter is a no-no: 'Finding that balance between homey and personal versus too much clutter is a big thing,' says Drescher. 'The house doesn't have to be fancy, but it does have to be clean and organised so a visiting family will feel comfortable.'

Startup costs: Buying guest linens, organising storage solutions and taking out specialist host insurance would all be on my list. Most platforms also charge an onboarding fee and take commission from bookings (usually 10-15%); you may also opt to pay for professional photographs that show your home in the best possible light. Then there are cleaning fees, repairs and replacements of broken or missing items to consider.

Potential earnings: There's nothing directly comparable with my house on the site (yet), but Joanna suggests £300-500 a night as a reasonable rate – more than I expected. I've since worked out that if I rent the house out for two weeks in the summer for £400 a night, I could earn about £4,000 after fees and other deductions. But do I really want to add hotel-ifying my house (Joanna recommends neutralising the decor to appeal to a wider range of guests, for example) to the long list of tasks I already have to deal with before a family trip? Not really, no.

3

OTHER POSSESSIONS

Depending on what else you own, there's potential to rent out anything from pets to parking spaces via agencies such as A-Z Animals and platforms such as JustPark. Have a campervan? You can hire it out to people dreaming of #vanlife by listing it on Camplify, Goboony or Indie Campers.

While I have none of those things, Fat Llama is a platform that invites you to loan household items to people in your neighbourhood for a price. Browsing by area encourages local handovers for items as varied as triathlon wetsuits and electric guitars. A quick recce of the site tells me there are a lot of electrical goods (wait, is that my neighbour's teenage son renting out all the cameras and GoPros? Clearly, it's helping him through film-making college), but also run-of-the-mill items I wouldn't have guessed would be popular. For example, I notice a lot of suitcases available to rent for £5 a day – if I rented two of my (very average) suitcases out for a total of three weeks a year, that would net me £210. It's hard to believe, but perhaps there are harried parents out there remembering they forgot to replace last year's broken suitcase the night before they go on holiday.

Startup costs: The time it takes to photograph and list items, plus a 25% Fat Llama service fee per transaction.

Potential earnings: If I had a waffle iron (£15 a day), hedge trimmer (£10) or podcasting microphone (around £40) gathering dust, I'd give it a whirl. As for my aforementioned suitcases, I'm sceptical about whether they'd find interested renters at the times they're available (ie not during the school holidays, when most people require suitcases). Ditto my outdoor heater, bought during lockdown two (if I'm not using it, is anyone else going to need it?).

‘PERHAPS A GUIDED VINTAGE SHOPPING TOUR WOULD APPEAL TO SOMEBODY?’

4

EXPERTISE

Freelancers have used sites such as Fiverr, Upwork and Freelancer to find clients for years. If you have a feeling that your mastermind subject or hobby would be of interest to others, Airbnb Experiences could be your platform – or mine. While I have no amazing specialities, I am an American living in London, so perhaps my well-honed shopping tour or guided walk along the South Bank, stopping for a glass of bubbly at the Tate Modern, would appeal to somebody?

All hosts price their own in-person experiences – a retired royal guard on the platform makes £25 per person for a guided walk around London, while Geoff – who offers walking tours taking in 10 filming locations from the *Harry Potter* series, charges £17 a head. If you have a camera and an eye for an Instagrammable picture (frankly, who doesn’t?), you could earn £40 an hour taking tourists’ photos in cities such as London, Winchester or Brighton.

Wanting to find out more, I click on ‘Host an experience’ on the Airbnb website. I’m slightly confused by Airbnb’s stipulation that experiences must demonstrate ‘expertise, insider access and connection’ – after the onboarding process of providing identity verification, I need to make a case about my suitability to provide the experience. But with so many services offered (I’m amazed by how many are available ‘today’ when I look – including rides on a penny-farthing bike starting at £95), it doesn’t seem an insurmountable challenge.

Startup costs: Your time and creativity in crafting your experience submission.

Potential earnings: Without any bookings or reviews, I’d initially have to price any experiences low, so that people would be willing to take a risk. Does £20 per head for a London vintage shopping trail sound reasonable?

SO, SHOULD I GET LISTING?

Amid the excitement of trying something new, it’s easy to forget that a listings frenzy doesn’t necessarily equate to rentals (and if it does, there’s the faff of handover, delivery and retrieval to factor in). If I look at the potential profits of what I might consider (renting out my house and suitcases during holiday season, renting out clothes, hosting five people on a shopping tour six times a year), I reckon I could raise around £6,000, which would be enough to cover a family holiday. And all from my (underheated) spare room.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TATIANA TIMOFEEVA AND ULAS & MERVE/STOCKSY

Is the best career *move going* back *to the* start?

Feeling stuck in a predictable job she'd done for two decades, Anniki Sommerville asked herself: what would happen if she went to work for a startup?

Man buns. Matcha lattes. Designer bikes. When I mentioned to friends that I was considering working at a startup, these were their immediate associations. 'It'll be lots of young people who work 24/7,' one commented. 'Imagine the tech you'll have to figure out!' Others visualised the startup world as toxic and full of alpha males in chinos. I shared some of these thoughts, worrying that it would be too fast-paced or that I'd be joining a doomed-to-fail company built on a single hipster's hunch. I was 48 and had two young kids. Who did I think I was, embracing startup life?

And yet, I needed a change. My then-job in market research had provided the bread and butter for my family for 18 years, but I found it predictable and unsatisfying. I no longer wanted to moderate focus groups about bagged salad (or anything else for that matter – although I worked out I'd averaged 18 hours a week on lettuce). Despite forging a career on the side as a published author of non-fiction books helping women navigate ageing, sex and relationships, that didn't generate enough income.

> 'ARE WE BRAVE ENOUGH TO CHOOSE SOMETHING SURPRISING, AND IF WE DO, HOW WILL WE FEEL?'

Then, in March 2020, my father died. Initially, I felt paralysed, grief robbing me of all rational thought. But as the months passed (with a pandemic thrown in), I realised I was embarking upon something of an identity crisis. Losing my father had somehow made me aware that I'd always chosen the path of least resistance, picking the option that didn't require too much thought or stepping out of my comfort zone. For a long time, I realised, I'd been underselling myself.

It would be a lie to say I had a clear vision about what to do next: I started by scrolling LinkedIn and noting down companies that looked interesting. Six weeks in, I noticed the founder of a healthcare startup had posted to say she was expanding her team and was looking for a head of marketing. I applied. It was ridiculous, as I'd never worked in marketing before, but a week later I got an email from the company, Jude, to say they wanted to talk to me about a role that involved brand management, content and community. 'We think you have a lot of skills that would be useful,' the email said (the first thing that surprised me, although it shouldn't have); others were noticing things about me that I took for granted myself.

Funnily enough, I felt remarkably calm during the interview. The founder, Peony Li, was young, yes, but she spoke with the experience of someone older. I realised I knew a lot about brands through my years of market research, and the kinds of things women were looking for when it came to products. I was offered the job and joined the team. Ten months later, I'm still here.

So, what is startup culture really like? Like I'd imagined, it is fast-paced: 20% of startups fail in their first year, so they have to prove themselves quickly, often with constant pressure from investors. They also tend to be made up of small teams in which everyone mucks in, or stuff doesn't get done. This could mean that you're frantically ordering a courier one minute and trying to write a strategic deck the next. There is no IT department, so you have to figure it out yourself.

There are also myths around startup founders: that they're unpredictable, unhinged and have massive egos (see Elon Musk). I haven't found this to be true (I've experienced worse bosses in the market research world) but the risk with startups is that they are often small, and it can only take one bad egg to completely transform a company's culture. One new boss can overhaul a business's strategy, and in doing so, rewrite the make-up of a team.

But for all the reasons it can be tricky, there's a long list of reasons why working in a startup can be career-changing. Not having an existing template to work from can be scary, but it's also liberating, plus I get the opportunity to create new things from scratch – something I'd never done before. Last year, Jude launched an underwear line (we are a bladder care company – our pants are leak-proof and very effective if you're off for a run). We shot a campaign using real women, and it was my responsibility to recruit the models, develop the creative vision and direct the shoot. The night before, I didn't sleep a wink. On the day of the shoot, the hair and makeup artist approached me. 'When is the creative director arriving?' she asked, one eyebrow raised. I paused for a beat. ‘I think that’s me,’ I said, and she winked. ‘Well, how do you want me to style the models’ hair, then?’

When I was researching my latest book, *F*ck Nailing It: How To Ditch The Job You Hate And Find Work You Love*, the women I surveyed told me the main reason they were put off the idea of quitting their jobs was lost confidence. Most of them felt they didn’t have the skills of younger team members (despite not having concrete examples of what these skills might be). Ageing can represent a weird paradox: on the one hand, we don’t care so much about what others think, but we also grapple with the idea that we aren’t relevant, or that our skills are out of date. According to a recent study, women are 40% less likely to start a business in midlife versus their male counterparts.

This may just be a personal hypothesis, but I believe one reason women balk at the idea of change is that we lean into the familiar. We are more likely to see the gaps in our experience and worry that we’re not good enough. A study by LinkedIn revealed that women are less likely to apply for ‘stretch roles’ or jobs that are more senior than their current roles. Perhaps it would be more constructive if we asked ourselves: is our work shaped by what society expects a woman of a certain age to do, or what we’re capable of? Are we courageous enough to choose something surprising, and if we do, how will we feel when we fast-forward to the end?

In terms of what I’ve learned from the experience of resetting my career, there are a few things. Firstly, I’m not the only woman who is over 40 at Jude – there’s one in her 40s and another in her 60s. Rather than being sidelined by my younger colleagues, my real nemesis is my own inner critic (who says unhelpful things, like: ‘You’re too old for this gig. That turkey neck is distracting everyone on the video call. Go back to your old job.’). I’ve found that Netflix is a great collective discussion point, and my colleagues are genuinely interested in my day-to-day challenges of managing work and the endless domestic admin that comes with being a parent. When I first started the job, I had to google everything, and had heart-stopping moments when I realised the presentation I was about to do would be flawed because it required presenting from an unfamiliar platform. Startups and their priorities shift all the time, and you have to move with them or get left behind. Three months in, I still didn’t really feel like I knew what I was doing; 10 months in, I’ve mastered a lot of new skills.

The broader picture is that midlife women can bring a lot of benefits to companies. Sara Tateno, co-founder of Happity, a platform that allows parents to find local kids’ activities, agrees. ‘At Happity, we have team members in their teens and in their 60s,’ she says. ‘There’s a misconception that tech is just for young people, but we deliberately attract people who are ready for a career change. The combination of experience and perspectives is good for the company; the younger employees are often the tech natives, but experienced people bring a lot of knowledge, insight and professionalism.’

Jude founder Peony Li also sees the benefit of recruiting an age-diverse team. ‘It makes us more resilient when it comes to navigating challenges, because the older members, generally, are better at predicting and handling people conflicts,’ she says. ‘They have more nuanced insights into customer behaviour and psychology, and tend to be calmer and less reactive.’

> ‘TOO OFTEN, WE TREAD WATER BECAUSE THE ALTERNATIVE IS TOO SCARY, BUT IS THIS A DANGEROUS STRATEGY?’

The calmness is something I agree with. Tessa, my colleague who is in her 60s, is rarely in a panic about anything. She has seen how things flare up and how they disappear again many times. I find that the older we get, the more perspective we gain at work, and this is truly beneficial to a team.

As a freelance startup recruiter, Tiffany Philippou believes it’s diversity above anything else that contributes to innovative businesses: ‘Entrepreneurial environments thrive when there are diverse minds and experiences in the room. However, I don’t know if the message has got out there yet. There’s definitely more work to be done to highlight the potential of midlife talent.’

For me, going ‘back to the start’ has certainly been invigorating. Since working for Jude, I’ve taken up outdoor swimming, travelled more, got better at meeting new people, and even unfollowed accounts on Instagram that no longer inspire me. Most importantly, I’ve rejected the idea that ageing is about more of the same.

Recently, I was browsing old emails from Dad. In one, he writes: ‘I wish I’d taken more risks and not stuck at the same thing all my life.’ It reminds me of a phone chat before he died, when he said: ‘Nik, you’ll be happy to hear that I’m finally getting down to writing my memoirs.’

We can get like this with our lives. Putting things off. Waiting until we have the time or the right skills. Saying we’ll do something when the kids are bigger. Too often, we tread water because the alternative is too scary. But isn’t this a dangerous strategy? Isn’t it better to acknowledge the fear, the sense of unreadiness, and move forward? To realise that being uncomfortable is a sign that you’re growing, not failing.

PHOTOGRAPHY: PETER NITSCH/GALLERY STOCK

How I got here

FOUNDER/DIRECTOR OF SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL CONSULTANCY NEOLUX **Maddy Simpson** ON HER CAREER JOURNEY

After completing a degree in Business Studies and Portuguese, Maddy Simpson merged her passions and embarked upon a career in travel PR, eventually carving out a niche in responsible tourism. Realising hotels and other businesses desperately needed support in creating sustainable solutions, in 2020 she set up her own consultancy firm, NeoLux. 'In a world where everyone is trying hard to be more sustainable, so many businesses need a helping hand – whether that's with realising what they're already doing counts, or accessing grants to help with things such as the cost of carbon neutral certification,' she says. 'We help them qualify and communicate what they're doing and, in turn, future-proof themselves.'

WHEN I BEGAN MY PR CAREER IN THE NOUGHTIES, RESPONSIBLE TOURISM WASN'T MAINSTREAM. Travel was still thought of in luxurious ways – people wanted the Hilton and Hyatt experience, and they certainly weren't thinking about carbon footprints. Perhaps a sign of the times, one of my jobs as a junior was to take a ruler to a newspaper and literally measure the amount of coverage our agency had secured for clients! Some press releases were still sent by post, and it was all very manual in those days.

> *'I had an awakening about the legacy we're leaving our children'*

MY FIRST JOB WAS A GREAT FOOT IN THE DOOR, and exposed me to some big clients, such as VisitEngland and Travelbag. But it was the charity The Travel Foundation that formed my first insight into tourism as a force for good. Its role is to ensure that tourism has a positive impact on destinations, creating schemes to benefit locals in countries such as Cyprus, where it developed tours to take holidaymakers to more rural parts of the island. It supported a handful of projects in Tobago and Kenya, and has since gone on to become one of the founders of the Future of Tourism Coalition and co-authored the Glasgow Declaration.

WORKING WITH VISIT CALIFORNIA FOR EIGHT YEARS WAS ANOTHER TURNING POINT. I had moved agencies by then and my remit was to introduce UK tourists to lesser-known parts of the state. By working with biodynamic winemakers, vegan restaurateurs and sustainable hoteliers, I soon realised that it was full of creative people doing things a different way. Responsible tourism was part of the Californian experience, with buzz phrases such as, 'Live like a local', 'Off the beaten path' and 'Experiential tourism' – all of which underpin responsible and sustainable travel today.

IT WAS AFTER HAVING MY CHILDREN THAT I DECIDED TO SET UP NEOLUX. At the time, I was the global head of PR at Small Luxury Hotels Of The World, and I had an awakening about the legacy we were leaving them with our planet. Part of my role was to piece together the brand's sustainability positioning, working with more than 500 hotels, and that experience solidified that I wanted to do something proactive in this space long-term.

AT NEOLUX, I WORK WITH A HUGE RANGE OF CLIENTS, from a carbon-neutral gardening company in Kent to the Tabacón Thermal Resort & Spa hotel in Costa Rica. So many businesses are keen to work out their position while avoiding 'greenwashing' – bigging up unsubstantiated claims and, more often than not, getting caught out. My first clients, the owners of a villa in the south of France, were starting from scratch, whereas Tabacón wanted to present its incredible work to the rest of the world.

IN THE EVOLVING WORLD OF SUSTAINABILITY, THERE'S ALWAYS SOMETHING NEW TO LEARN. Before I launched NeoLux, I did a two-month course at the Cambridge Institute for Sustainability Leadership, and I've qualified as an auditor for Green Globe, a leader in sustainable tourism certification. The highlight of my new career has been featuring in a film for One Carbon World shown at COP27 last year. I hadn't been running NeoLux very long, so contributing with people on a global stage was a real achievement.

MY NEXT GOAL IS TO AUDIT PEOPLE'S HOMES IN THE SAME WAY I DO HOTELS. Forty per cent of the UK's carbon footprint comes from households, so I'm about to launch a service to help make homes more eco-efficient. For instance, you can get free tap aerators from water companies that reduce the water flow by about 60%. It's little tweaks like this that can help the planet – and save ourselves money.

AS TOLD TO: GEORGIA GREEN

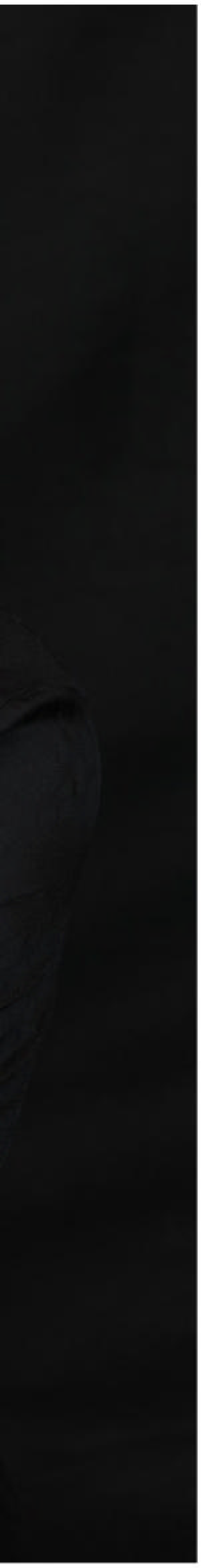
SOUL SINGER

Scion of the Rat Pack, creator of impossibly catchy pop hits, husband and father of four – Michael Bublé is many things to many people. But, as he tells Charlotte Oliver, he’s on his own voyage of self-discovery

‘I could have called you myself,’ says Michael Bublé down the phone from his Vancouver home, ‘but I wanted to feel the power of having my assistant call you and say, “I’m handing you over to Michael.” That just shows you how huge and famous I am.’ We’re only seconds into our interview time, and already, I’m getting a flavour of Bublé’s notoriously cheeky sense of humour.

The irony is, of course, that I don’t need reminding just how famous he is. With four Grammy Awards to his name, 75m records sold worldwide, and dominion over three separate genres – swing-era standards, catchy pop hits and the ever-booming Christmas market – Bublé is, indeed, one of the most successful singers around. He is also unique, occupying a space that belongs firmly to him.

Yet, during our conversation, it becomes clear the 47-year-old is very hard to define. Despite being an ‘old soul’, who fell in love with the likes of Dean Martin and Frank Sinatra at the age



of five, he's also a self-confessed 'big kid', who is forever winding people up and making his 2.4m followers laugh on TikTok. 'People think I'm 70 on the inside, but I'm more like a 17-year-old,' he grins. 'That's my maturity level.'

Likewise, he's both a throwback to the golden era of the Rat Pack, as well as a singer and songwriter at the forefront of modern music. His nine studio albums (plus two independent releases and three live albums) have always intermingled legendary songs such as *Feeling Good* and *Cry Me A River* with self-penned hits, including *Home* and *Everything*. Then there's the dichotomy between Bublé the stage performer, who comes alive in front of millions and wears his 'alter ego' persona like a superhero's cape; and the private family man, who has faced unthinkable struggles in his home life and felt vulnerable in the process.

'It's interesting when I meet people walking down the street,' he muses. 'One person will say, "You're the Sinatra of our generation!", some teenagers will start singing *Haven't Met You Yet*, and then someone else will yell, "Oh my God, it's Mr Christmas!" Can you imagine how weird it is for my kids – they're just standing there thinking, "Who the f**k is my dad?"'

So, who is the real Michael Bublé? Born in Burnaby, Canada, to parents of Italian and Croatian descent, he found his prodigious love for music as a young child. 'From the age of five or six, I just knew I was more than a passionate fan,' he recalls. 'Other things, I couldn't focus on; but music, I could. When I heard my grandfather playing Dean Martin and The Mills Brothers, I wasn't necessarily aware of the style; I was more obsessed with the construction of the songs. I heard such beauty in the lyrical content, the melodies, and the most intricate, beautiful arrangements. I couldn't articulate what I was hearing – I just knew I loved it.'

His Italian-born grandfather, Demetrio, financed his singing lessons throughout his childhood, even offering his professional plumbing services in exchange for venues giving his grandson stage time. While Bublé's summer holidays were reserved for working for his commercial fisherman father, Lewis, the rest of his time was spent performing wherever he could: on cruise ships, in nightclubs, hotel lounges and shopping malls.

Finally, he got his big break after a chance encounter with LA producer David Foster, who agreed to work on his 2003 major-label debut album. It went on to become a bestseller in more than 15 countries and Bublé found his global platform.

We're speaking ahead of Bublé's UK arena tour, *Higher*, which marks two decades in the industry. The tour kicked off last year across the US and South America and now – as he prepares to bring the show to Europe – his ambition is to deliver his best ever performance.

> **'I heard such beauty in the lyrical content, melodies and arrangements'**

'I think this is the best show I've done in my life,' he says. 'I love the recording studio, and filming in front of a camera, but it's not the same as putting thousands of people in a room, who have all gone through a ton and need that connection. What I want to be, without ever preaching, is a unifier. It's more than just singing songs or telling a joke. Especially given the times we're living in, I'm really trying to unify people and lift them up.

'I honestly love my audience so much,' he adds. 'People might be cynical and say, "What do you mean you love them? They're strangers in the dark," but I really do. They've stayed with me for 20 years. I have a beautiful life and a beautiful family because of them. I want to give them everything they deserve. It's an honour and a privilege to stand up there every night.'

That's not to say Bublé doesn't grapple with the business. With success comes responsibility, pressure and the drive to be the very best artist he can be, while also being present for his loved ones. Add to that the rising cost of touring, the effects of Covid that still linger and the fact that he has a crew of 130 to provide an income for, and it's hardly surprising that the job sometimes presents inner conflict. In Bublé's words, it's 'a constant fight for your soul'.

So, how does he manage? 'Not well,' he admits. 'I was grumpy yesterday – I was given one of my schedules for next year, and it was longer than I wanted it to be. I'd told them I wanted three weeks on and two weeks off, and then I found out I had one run of over a month. So, no, I wasn't great with it. I said to my manager, "You know what? You've sold the tickets now, so I'm not backing out, but this isn't going to happen again."

'When it comes to making decisions about my career, the real question is: can I deal with the consequences of that decision? If I shorten a tour or I don't go to a red carpet event, can I deal

with the consequences of that hurting my career, damaging my credibility, ruining the chance to win this or that award or step up to a new level of success? Those are hard things to battle with; even though I know right from wrong, I still battle. Sometimes I win, other times I go on tour for longer than I wanted, I miss my family and I'm not happy about it.'

It's here that Bublé's role as husband and father really shines through. The singer met his wife, Argentine actor Luisana Lopilato, in 2008, and wrote his first UK top 10 single, *Haven't Met You Yet*, about her in 2009 (she also starred in the music video). The pair married in 2011 and went on to have four children together – Noah, nine, Elias, seven, Vida, four, and Cielo, who was born last August.

Life took a tragic turn in 2016, however, when Noah was diagnosed with liver cancer at the age of three, prompting the singer to step away from the spotlight and cancel all commitments during his son's chemotherapy and radiotherapy. Six years later, Noah has made a full recovery and, although I've been warned by Bublé's reps to avoid the subject, he openly shares how the experience cracked him open, revealing the vulnerable human being that lurked beneath a very public persona.

'It was over for me once my son was diagnosed,' he says. 'That, of course, changed me in a big way – it changed what mattered to me, it changed how I saw life. For most of my life as an entertainer and, especially on stage, I'd become my alter ego. I'd become the superhero I always wanted to be. Then my wife and I went through this unthinkable thing, and I lost that alter ego.

'When I felt strong enough and I was ready to tour, I knew it was time to find that alter ego and become Superman again. And so, I found him, and I saw people screaming and throwing things and I realised, "This is my happiness." So, that's where I'm at now: I get to protect the real guy inside, and I also get to become a superhero on stage.'

> 'I'm not dumb enough to think happiness lies in good reviews or ticket sales'

When he's not on the road, Bublé leads a simple life with his family at their home in Vancouver. 'I love to play,' he says. 'If you came into the kitchen last night, you'd have found us either wrestling or throwing balls, with my wife yelling that I was going to break everything.'

What has he learned, I ask, about sustaining a successful relationship, with four children under 10 and the world's eyes upon him? 'More than anything, my wife and I understand that each other's fulfilment is important,' he muses. 'I'm not saying we're perfect – nobody is – but we both have that understanding. I won't be touring for certain months next year because she'll be filming a movie, and so I'll be Daddy on set, and then she'll do the same for me. We don't care what we do – being together is the goal.'

He's all too aware that fame and fortune can often tear relationships apart. 'It's not like I'm going to repeat that same old story,' he begins, 'where a man or woman wants to be famous and then loses everything they've wanted in the process because their ego and false self has just

PHOTOGRAPHY: NORMAN JEAN ROY

driven them towards more fame or power. That's not the story here. I'm not dumb enough to think that happiness lies in good reviews or ticket sales; my family has shown me that.'

So, as he celebrates 20 years in the industry, the question remains: who is Michael Bublé? The answer is ever-evolving.

'I'm a maverick,' he says. 'I don't know where I belong, and that's what works for me. But the vision has always been to show growth, however alienating that might be to people who liked me in the first place. That's coming. I can't tell you the exact projects, but you'll know soon enough. Anyway, I'm 17, right? I've got tons of time.'

Michael Bublé's 14-date UK arena tour, Higher, begins this March. Tickets available now, via tegeurope.com

MON£Y AFFAIRS

From rows about spending to bickering over who has control of the thermostat, money has a way of undoing harmony in a relationship. So is it time to overhaul your approach?

According to a recent survey, finances are the number one cause of conflict in relationships*, with a third of couples admitting they're incompatible with their partner when it comes to spending and saving. While 62% believe their partner spends too much, a third say they've kept financial secrets from their other half, from personal savings stashes to hidden debt. Whatever your set-up, the approach you take to managing your money as a couple can be as unique as your relationship, and carries the risk of impacting your shared financial wellbeing if left unchecked. So, what does a healthy model of organising your finances together look like? We asked two experts to suggest three ways to manage your money in harmony…

1

ALL MINE

SEPARATE FINANCES

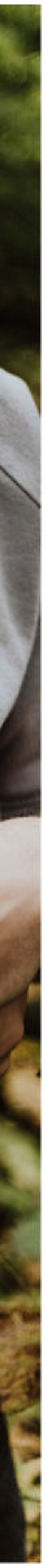
In some situations, such as if one of you has a large debt or poor credit rating that could impact the other person (for example, if you were trying to secure a mortgage), having separate finances has its merits, says Norma Cassius, money management consultant and founder of Think Like A Bank.

If this is the system for you, you'll need a plan. Be clear who takes the lead on what and distribute tasks and responsibilities evenly, says Julie Flynn, an independent financial adviser at Bree Wealth. You'll also need to give some thought to how you split smaller joint day-to-day costs, such as going to the cinema or doing a grocery shop. 'Working out how you split fixed expenses is the easy bit, but you have to look at your expenses as a whole,' says Flynn. 'If you go out for dinner, how will you split the cost?' Apps such as Splitwise allow you to add details of things you've paid for so you can keep tabs on who owes whom.

Being as open as possible about spending is key: keeping finances separate shouldn't equate to keeping finances secret, which over time may place a strain on the relationship. For help opening up the conversation, find a counsellor at counselling-directory.org.uk.

Make it work

- Create a spreadsheet for expenses that you fill in each time you spend, or go through bank statements together every month. As one person pays each bill, you will need to be comfortable with being 'in debt' to your partner from time to time.
- Agree on an approach and revisit this once a year. The way you manage your money will evolve as your life together changes. If you start a family, for example, having a joint account alongside your own accounts might make more sense.
- Consider creating shared financial goals. 'This could be putting an amount into your savings accounts each month towards a holiday,' says Cassius. Check in regularly on the progress each of you is making towards saving for this goal.
- Approach discussions from a place of compassion and offer support. Exploring why one person finds it difficult to be open about their finances can help.



2

IN IT TOGETHER

JOINT ACCOUNT FOR BILLS

Joint accounts used to be the norm for couples, but these days, just over half of married and cohabiting couples have one**. Many couples choose to retain their own personal current accounts, from which they transfer a portion of their income each month into the joint account. 'What's healthy in this scenario is that there's collaboration regarding the bills, but each partner has financial independence because they have their own money as well,' Flynn notes. 'Each person has complete freedom to do what they want with that money with no fear of judgement – I don't think you can underestimate the value of that.'

If one of you earns significantly more than the other, work out a split that seems fair to you both. For some that's 50/50, whereas others prefer to pay in a percentage according to the amount they each earn. 'If your partner thinks it would make sense for you both to contribute the same amount but you disagree, it can help to write everything down, including how much each of you will be left with at the end of the month,' says Cassius. 'Seeing those numbers in black and white makes it hard to argue.'

There are disadvantages to this approach: for a start, if you have a joint account, you're jointly liable for debt, such as an overdraft. If your partner can't pay, the bank could come after you for the lot.

Make it work

- Before you set up a joint account, agree how you'll use it. Is it for household necessities only? Do you want an overdraft facility? The terms and conditions on joint accounts vary from bank to bank, particularly in relation to what happens if you want to close or freeze a joint account. Check your bank's approach (and get details in writing) before you open one. For more information, download the You And Your Joint Account leaflet from the Building Societies Association website (bsa.org.uk).
- Expect the unexpected. 'It's a good idea to sit down at the start of the month and make a list of additional spending you can see coming up,' says Flynn. 'Work out how much more you may both need to pay into the joint account to cover this.' You might also consider saving into a joint emergency fund so you both have access to cash quickly if you need it.
- Don't wait until there's a problem to talk about money. 'Too often, when couples start talking about money it's when a big, unexpected bill has arrived,' says Flynn. 'That's not the time to start a conversation. Talk about finances in a calm environment where you feel safe saying what you need to say.'

> 'DON'T WAIT UNTIL THERE'S A PROBLEM TO TALK ABOUT MONEY'

3

WHAT'S YOURS IS MINE

JOINT ACCOUNT FOR EVERYTHING

Just under a third (32%) of couples in the UK who live together pool their incomes and savings in joint accounts, according to research from Legal & General. 'The advantage of this is that you can both see exactly what's going on financially at all times,' says Cassius. 'That's very healthy.' It can also be a good way of managing your money if one of you doesn't have an income, or you earn very different amounts.

Of course, not everyone will feel comfortable with this level of visibility over their spending habits – you might not want your partner knowing every time you spend £25 on a lipstick, for example. Problems can also arise if one person spends significantly more than the other, so discuss ground rules, such as putting a limit on the maximum you can spend without consulting each other and an amount set aside for frivolous spending.

Make it work

- Flynn suggests having a conversation about your values around money early on. If feeling financially secure is important to you, saving is likely to be a priority. Others might feel having experiences together is more important. Decide on four or five questions you can use to sense-check big purchases. For example, 'If we say yes to this, do we have to say no to something else?'
- Keeping tabs on joint spending can become unwieldy when the payments of two people are going out of the same account. If your banking app allows you to create 'pots' of money allocated for different areas of spending, this can help you put aside money for different things. Alternatively, apps such as Nova Money, Lumio, Emma and Money Dashboard can help you to categorise spending and see what's going out of the joint account and where.
- Ensure you're making the most of the tax allowances available to each of you when you save. As you can't hold a joint ISA with your partner, opening ISAs separately in your own names means you can collectively save up to £40,000 in one financial year without paying tax on any interest earned on cash savings, or income or capital gains from investments.
- Check in with each other on a monthly basis. 'Make it an enjoyable experience by opening a bottle of wine or getting a takeaway while you do it,' says Cassius. 'It doesn't have to be miserable! Things change all the time so you need to keep those lines of communication open. It's about creating that space for conversations about money to be had.'

FINANCIALLY Fabulous
For money-saving tips, news and brilliant advice, sign up to our fortnightly newsletter at **redonline.co.uk/ffnewsletter**

WORDS: EMILIE MARTIN, JOANNE FINNEY.
PHOTOGRAPHY: PRISCILLA DU PREEZ/UNSPLASH.

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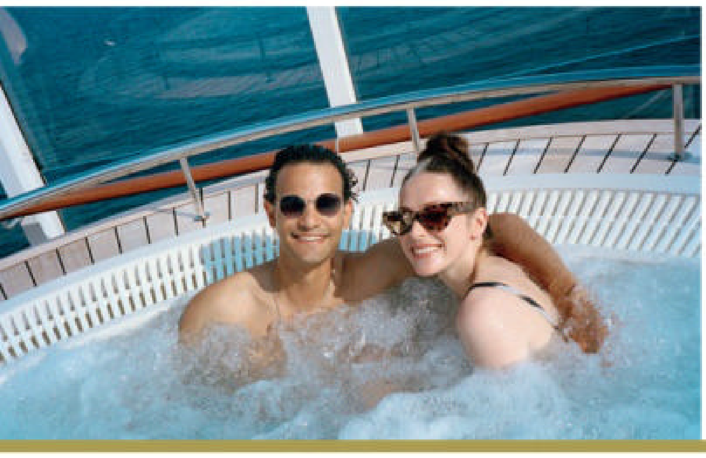

BOOK BY 6 MARCH 2023

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[†] Early Saver price of £599 per person is based on two adults sharing the lowest grade of Inside cabin available on cruise G329. Prices are subject to availability and may go up or down. Early Saver bookings are made at the relevant cabin grade and a cabin number is allocated by P&O Cruises prior to departure. Dining preferences are not guaranteed. Shuttle buses in ports are an additional cost. Early Saver prices apply to new bookings only. These terms and conditions vary, where relevant, the applicable booking conditions which are otherwise unchanged. [‡] Pay monthly option is available on direct bookings only. For full terms and conditions, please visit www.pocruises.com/why-choose-us/pay-monthly. For up-to-date prices and full terms and conditions which you must read before booking, please visit www.pocruises.com.

ABTA
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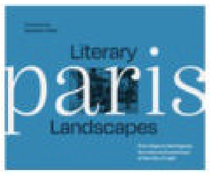
READS

Edited by *Ella Dove*

Streets with STORIES

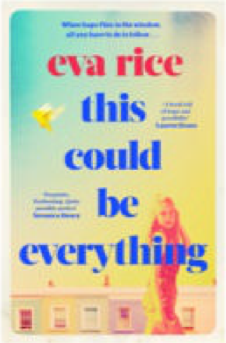
FEW PLACES HAVE SUCH LITERARY HERITAGE AS PARIS, THE CITY THAT EVERYONE FROM VICTOR HUGO TO SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR HAS CALLED HOME. THIS BEAUTIFUL BOOK CELEBRATES THE LOCATIONS THAT HAVE INFLUENCED LITERATURE, INCLUDING THE CAPITAL'S MOST-LOVED BOOKSHOPS, SUCH AS MONTMARTRE ARTS CENTRE LA HALLE SAINT-PIERRE (PICTURED).



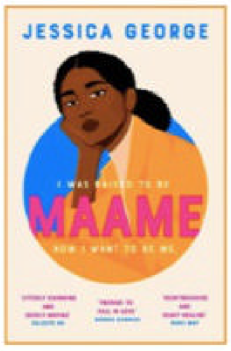
Literary Landscapes Paris (Pavilion) by Sandrine Voillet is out 2nd February

The month's BEST BOOKS

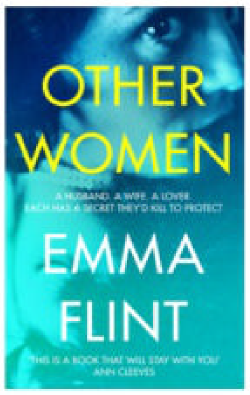
LITERARY EDITOR **Sarra Manning** PICKS HER FAVOURITE READS…



This Could Be Everything by Eva Rice
(Simon & Schuster, £16.99, out 16th February)
February has barely left her room since her twin's death, until Yellow, a fugitive canary, arrives in her kitchen and brings pet shop boy Theo into her life. Set in the 1990s, this is a gorgeous story about first love and hope.

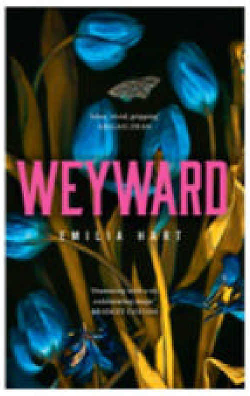


Maame by Jessica George
(Hodder & Stoughton, £14.99, out 14th February)
Maddie is the dutiful people-pleaser in her Anglo-Ghanaian family, and when she finally has a chance to break free, she realises she doesn't know who she is. A touching coming-of-age story about finding your inner strength.

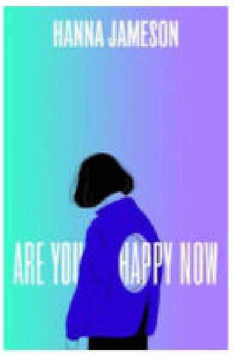


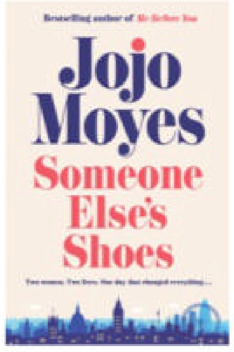
Other Women by Emma Flint
(Picador, £16.99, out 23rd February)
Based on a shocking real-life murder in the 1920s, *Other Women* focuses on Beatrice, almost invisible until she falls in love with a colleague, and Kate, seen as a devoted wife and mother, until their lives converge. I expect to see it on all awards shortlists.

Weyward by Emilia Hart
(Borough Press, £14.99, out 2nd February)
In this bold witchy debut, three generations of women are bound through controlling men and a connection to the natural world. When Kate flees an abusive relationship, she uncovers a secret hidden since 1619, when her ancestor was tried as a witch.



Are You Happy Now by Hanna Jameson
(Viking, £14.99, out 2nd February)
All over the world, people sit down and refuse to get up, as a catatonic pandemic takes hold. As a deadly virus exposes the frailties of their lives, Yun, Emory, Andrew and Fin are all searching for their own versions of happiness in this dark, addictive novel set in New York.





Someone Else's Shoes by Jojo Moyes
(Michael Joseph, £22, out 2nd February)
Put-upon Sam and spoilt trophy wife Nisha are both having a terrible day. When Sam accidentally picks up Nisha's bag at the gym, it sets them on a collision course, with life-changing effects. A stirring tale of sisterhood, survival and being seen.

‘READING POETRY GENERATES THE SAME FEELING AS TALKING THROUGH PROBLEMS’

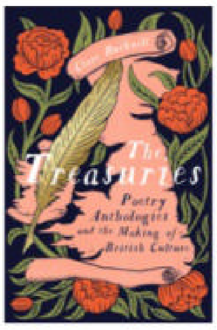
IN HER FASCINATING NEW BOOK, ACADEMIC AND AUTHOR **Clare Bucknell** SHARES THE IMPACT OF POETRY ANTHOLOGIES

Your book, *The Treasuries: Poetry Anthologies And The Making Of British Culture*, charts the history of poetry anthologies and their influence on British society. How did you become interested in anthologies?
I’ve always been interested in how poetry reflects or records ideas and events, and how it shapes how people think and act. After studying English at the University of Oxford, I went on to become an academic, and came to realise that anthologies tell us a lot about what we value as a culture, what we consider worth preserving, and what we want to censor.

How far back does the poetry anthology date?
The first printed anthologies were created in the Renaissance era, and the most popular form was something called a ‘commonplace book’, which we’d think of now like a scrapbook – a place where anthologists collected lots of poems they found fascinating, and put them under different headings such as ‘love’, ‘war’ or ‘patriotism’. But the world ‘anthology’ actually comes from Ancient Greek ‘anthologia’, meaning ‘a gathering of flowers’.

In some of the earliest anthologies, poems would be gathered but, in some cases, edited beyond recognition. Why?
In the 18th century, it was quite common that anthologies were created to introduce young women and children to the ‘morally safe’ bits of poets such as Shakespeare, John Milton and Jonathan Swift. The poems would be censored, with large chunks taken out, the idea being that if they were read in their original form, they may lead young women’s minds astray! This created a shrunk-down and reduced version of the culture that many women would have encountered, and looking back, these anthologies provide a fascinating glimpse into how women’s roles were viewed. Fears about intellectual independence in women even meant that, by the late 18th century, there was a tradition of equating bookishness in girls with unmarriageability.

Anthologies have also long been used for bibliotherapy [a creative arts therapy involving storytelling or reading specific texts]. How did the link between books and wellbeing come about?
Bibliotherapy emerged just after the First World War, when innovative medical staff employed librarians in hospitals to dispense books to traumatised and shell-shocked soldiers. Since then, the field has grown hugely, with anthologies such as William Sieghart’s *The Poetry Pharmacy* developed specifically to aid wellbeing. Poetry therapy practitioners maintain that the way poems look on the page, and the way they sound, with rhythm, harmony and balance, provides a comfort and stillness like a psychotherapeutic encounter. It generates the same feeling as talking through your problems, because you feel listened to.



The Treasuries: Poetry Anthologies And The Making Of British Culture (Head of Zeus) by Clare Bucknell is out 2nd February

WELL-VERSED COLLECTIONS

Clare reveals her top three poetry anthologies.

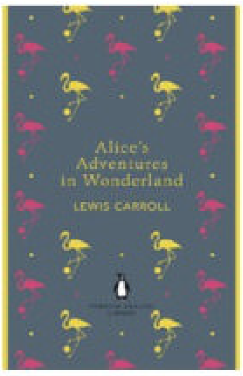
The Mersey Sound
by Roger McGough, Brian Patten and Adrian Henri
This 1967 poetry collection is the bestselling of all time. Featuring the work of three major Liverpool poets who made poetry synonymous with popular culture, it still feels fresh, modern and cool.

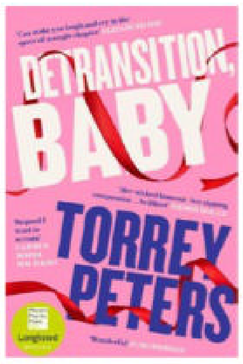
The Golden Treasury
compiled by Francis Turner Palgrave
Created by a Victorian educationalist who believed in making the arts accessible to working-class readers, this is a wonderful collection of short, readable poems.

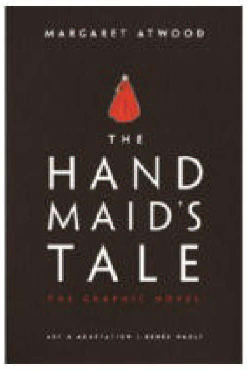
The Poet’s Tongue
edited by WH Auden and John Garrett
Published in 1935, this collection was curated on the principle that poetry is a form of memorable speech, like jokes or slang. So works by Keats and Byron are combined with nursery rhymes, carols, sea shanties and riddles.

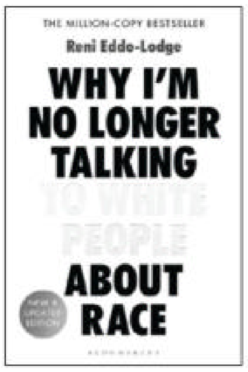
MUST-READ THIS MONTH

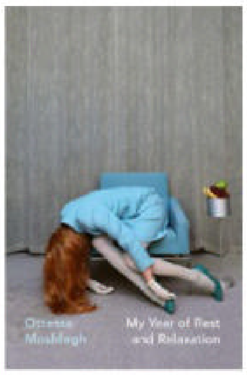
Salman Rushdie’s new novel, **Victory City**, is his first release since he was brutally attacked at a New York conference last August, losing the sight in one eye and use of one hand. This magical realist feminist tale is a testament to the power of storytelling. Out 9th February (Jonathan Cape).

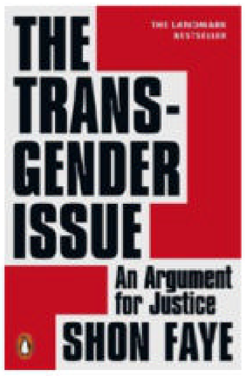

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland
LEWIS CARROLL

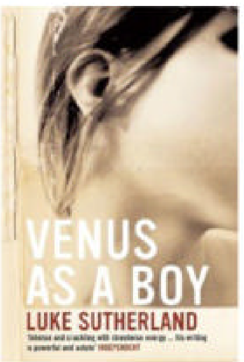

DETRANSITION, BABY
TORREY PETERS


MARGARET ATWOOD
THE HANDMAID'S TALE


THE MILLION-COPY BESTSELLER
Reni Eddo-Lodge
WHY I'M NO LONGER TALKING TO WHITE PEOPLE ABOUT RACE


Ottessa Moshfegh
My Year of Rest and Relaxation


THE LANDMARK BESTSELLER
THE TRANSGENDER ISSUE
An Argument for Justice
SHON FAYE


VENUS AS A BOY
LUKE SUTHERLAND

My life in BOOKS

MODEL AND ACTIVIST **Munroe Bergdorf** SHARES THE BOOKS THAT HAVE SHAPED HER LIFE

My favourite book as a child was… *Alice's Adventures In Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.* I've always felt close to Alice, in the sense that I've often felt part of a world that I don't fit into or understand. I still find myself internally quoting it when life throws a curve ball.

My favourite quote is from… *Detransition, Baby by Torrey Peters.* 'Trans women are juvenile elephants. We are stronger and more powerful than we understand. We are fifteen thousand pounds of muscle and bone forged from rage and trauma, armed with ivory spears and faces unique in nature, living in grasslands where any of the ubiquitous humans may or may not be a poacher. With our strength, we can destroy each other with ease. But we are a lost generation. We have no elders, no stable groups, no one to teach us to countenance pain. No matriarchs to tell the young girls to knock it off or show off their own long lives lived happily and well.' This summarises both the hope and despair of so many trans women's lived experiences.

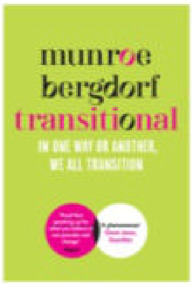
The character I love the most is… *Offred in The Handmaid's Tale by Margaret Atwood.* I read it in school and fell in love with the narrator's resilience, dark sense of humour and determination to survive the most harrowing of circumstances. School was not a happy place for me, so a book with a protagonist of such strength was an encouraging escape.

The book that got me through a difficult time is… *Why I'm No Longer Talking To White People About Race by Reni Eddo-Lodge.* Like so many people of colour, I read this at a time when I needed answers to questions about the functioning of race in our society. Being able to put words to feelings is a part of the battle, as you realise those feelings are shared with your community, who can offer perspective and support.

The character I relate to most is… *The unnamed narrator of My Year Of Rest And Relaxation by Ottessa Moshfegh.* I read this during lockdown, while struggling with anxiety and depression. All I wanted to do was sleep it away and escape into a world where I didn't have to feel how I felt. The dreamlike and often blurred reality of the narrator, intent on hiding from the world, is told through a darkly satirical lens and was, in a strange way, a welcome read during a bleak and disorientating time.

The one book I think everyone should read is… *The Transgender Issue by Shon Faye.* We are living in a time of normalised transphobia. This book clearly lays out the state of play of transgender rights at a time when our community is painted as an 'issue', while the problems affecting our daily lives are overlooked and legitimised.

My all-time favourite book is… *Venus As A Boy by Luke Sutherland.* I've read this so many times, I've lost count. It's a beautifully immersive, twisted fairy tale about a mysterious queer sex worker who is turning into gold in a Soho flat. The way Luke writes about gender, queerness and desire in such an expansive and otherworldly way was exactly what I needed in my late teens, and I urge everyone to read it.

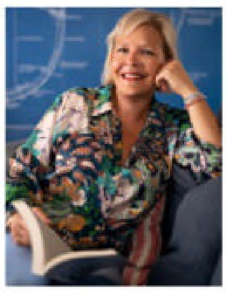

munroe bergdorf
transitional
IN ONE WAY OR ANOTHER, WE ALL TRANSITION

Transitional (Bloomsbury Tonic) by Munroe Bergdorf is out 16th February

UNITED BY WRITING

WRITING CAN BE A LONELY PURSUIT, BUT A SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITY CAN MAKE ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO CREATIVITY, AS DEBUT AUTHORS **Georgina Moore** AND **Becky Hunter** EXPLAIN…

Georgina Moore and Becky Hunter were colleagues before they were friends, both working at the publisher Headline, where Georgina was communications director and Becky was senior publicity manager. The pair still work together in publishing on a freelance basis, but have grown particularly close over the last six years while both writing their first novels. This year, their debuts, ***The Garnett Girls*** and ***One Moment***, are published within weeks of each other. Here, Georgina and Becky share why their friendship has been such a driving force in their success…



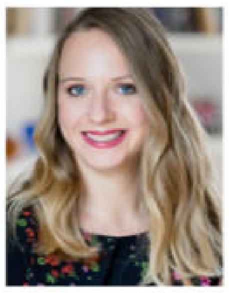
Georgina says…

'I told Becky I was writing long before I told anyone else in publishing. It's terrifying to put your head above the parapet when you work in the industry, but I knew Becky would understand as she was writing, too.

In many ways, we've helped each other. Becky can be very hard on herself, so I remind her how well she's doing and how amazing she is. In return, she's taught me to be more productive and not so precious with my writing.

When I was working on *The Garnett Girls* and Becky was writing *One Moment*, we spent five days together on a houseboat on the Isle of Wight, where *The Garnett Girls* is set. It was an amazing trip, so easy, but also a great lesson for me to see someone get up every day and just get on with it! Becky is such a fast writer. I came away writing 10-15,000 words a day – more than double what I would usually manage – and felt energised and excited to keep going.

My debut novel, *The Garnett Girls,* is about mothers and daughters and the push/pull of that relationship. It's about the mistakes parents can make and how those can haunt our childhoods and beyond. Becky is 30 and I'm 52, so we're at very different stages of life, but that has really helped me to discuss characters and what they're going through. Our friendship works because we will always be each other's sounding board – in writing and in life.'



Becky says…

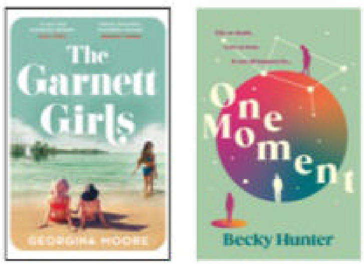
'Publishing is such a messy, complicated industry – a lot of people just assume that once you have a book deal, that's it, nothing to worry about. But you are always on edge as an author, waiting to see how well the book will do, whether a publisher will buy another book, whether this is going to be a career from which you could be dropped at any time. Georgina and I understand both sides of the coin, and that has been so helpful in finding an ally to go through this process with.

I'd written so many novels before this one, trying and failing to get published. Georgina refused to let me give up hope that I would finally get there, and it was that pragmatism that kept me going.

I talked a lot about *One Moment* when we were together on the Isle of Wight, worrying that it wasn't good enough and trying to work out what made the characters tick. Those brainstorming sessions really fed into what the novel is and I'd say I wrote about 40% of it on the island with Georgina there. It's probably not a coincidence that about a month later we both got our book deals here and in the US!

Our cross-generational friendship means that Georgina is brilliant at reassuring me, not just at work but in all kinds of ways… She has been where I am, and when I'm stressing about not finding the love of my life, or not knowing where I'm going to be in 10 years' time, she has confidence that it will be fine!

Together, we're a great team, always pushing each other to be better. She believes in my growth, and that makes me believe in it – which is really important if you want to make a career out of writing.'



The Garnett Girls (HQ, £14.99) by Georgina Moore is out 16th February. One Moment (Corvus, £14.99) by Becky Hunter is out 2nd March

CULTURE FIX

CULTURE TEACHES US TO EMBRACE NEW PERSPECTIVES, WHETHER THROUGH THE RETELLING OF CLASSIC STORIES OR NUANCED UNDERSTANDINGS OF THE WORLD AROUND US, SAYS BRYONY GOOCH

Julianne MOORE
Sebastian STAN
Justice SMITH
Briana MIDDLETON
and John LITHGOW
SHARPER

From left: new series *Sharper*; Sophie Okonedo wows in *Medea*; Lily James and Shazad Latif in *What's Love Got To Do With It?*; Scottish Opera presents a medley of shows

STREAM

Sharper

Julianne Moore joins an impressive ensemble cast, including John Lithgow and Sebastian Stan, to play a con artist setting her sights on Manhattan's billionaire elite in this comedy thriller from *The Crown* director Benjamin Caron. While the plot details are under wraps, word is that this take-down-the-rich series will be one of the most buzzed-about this year. On Apple TV+ from 17th February

PLAY

Medea

Sophie Okonedo stars in this West End adaptation of the infamous Greek tragedy, described by director Dominic Cooke as 'a play defined by the actor who plays it'. In his interpretation, the male roles are played by one actor, Ben Daniels, making for a much-anticipated show when it arrives at London's @sohoplace, the capital's first new purpose-built theatre in 50 years. From 17th February; visit sohoplace.org

FILM

What's Love Got To Do With It?

Having turned to filmmaking in recent years, Jemima Khan follows the success of *Impeachment* with this cross-cultural romcom about arranged marriage, starring Lily James. Inspired by her decade in Lahore with then-husband Imran Khan, she examines how her views of love were challenged by friends' marriages at that time. In cinemas from 24th February

THEATRE

Opera Highlights

Scottish Opera is set to perform a medley of operatic delights across the Highlands and Islands, with a cast featuring Annie Reilly and Colin Murray. The season promises to be a versatile display of opera; classics such as *The Marriage Of Figaro* will appear alongside a world premiere of *Told By An Idiot,* a retelling of *Macbeth.* 14th February to 25th March; visit scottishopera.org.uk/shows/

PHOTOGRAPHY: ELLIE SMITH, ALAMY, MARIANO VIVANCO, JANE MCLEISH KELSEY, ROBERT VIGLASKY

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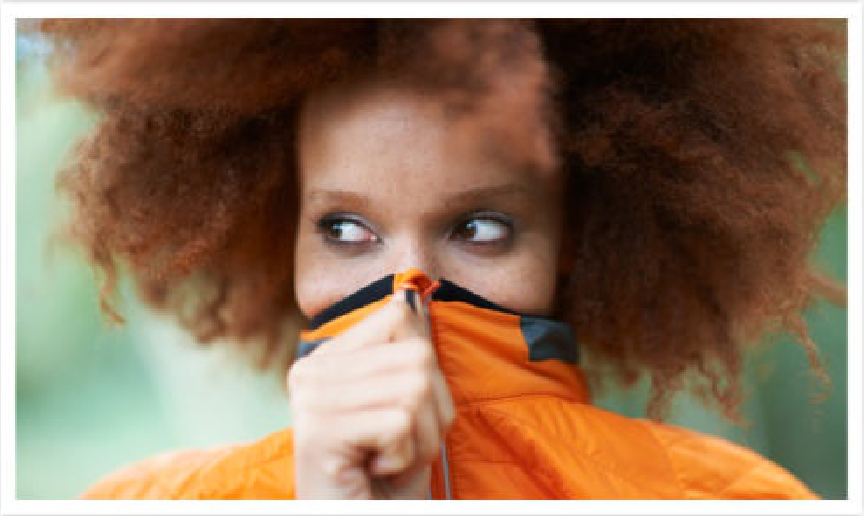

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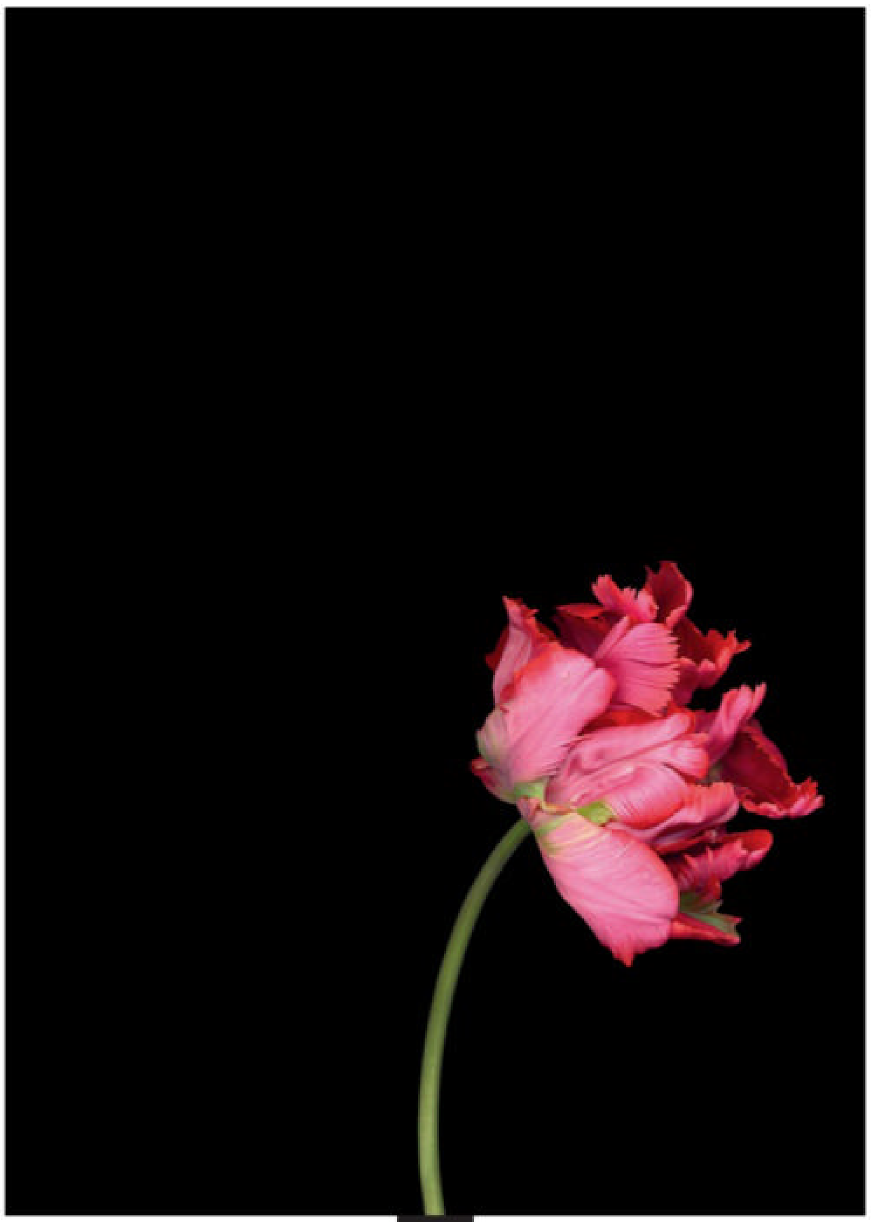

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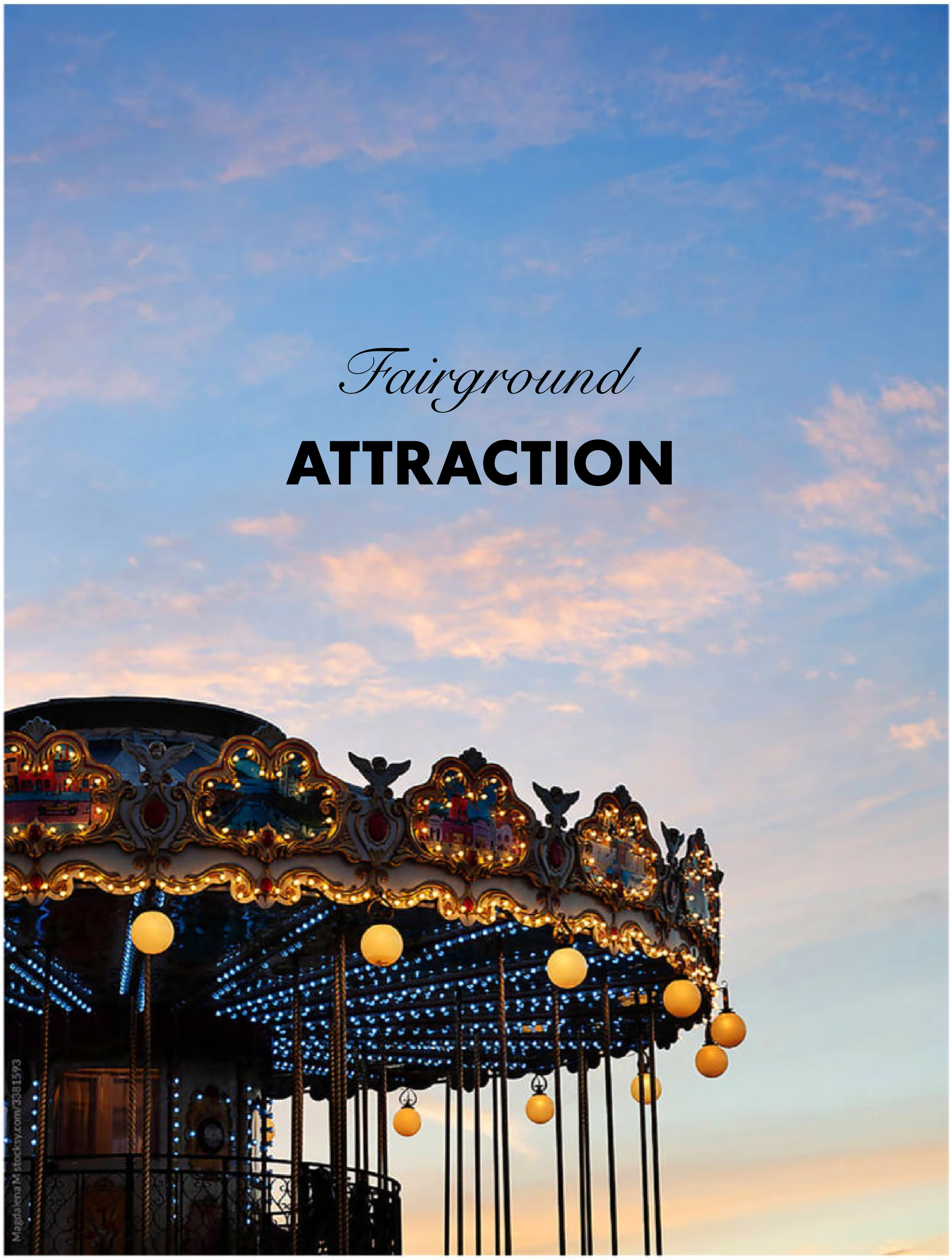
THE FRAGRANCE FOUNDATION UK

FASHION

Edited by
Oonagh Brennan

Fairground ATTRACTION



BRACE YOURSELVES FOR AN EXHILARATING RIDE THROUGH A SHOWSTOPPER SEASON OF SPRING STYLE. DESIGNERS TURN UP THE DECIBELS WITH SHOUTY SEQUINS, SENSATIONAL SILHOUETTES AND CABARET COLOURS

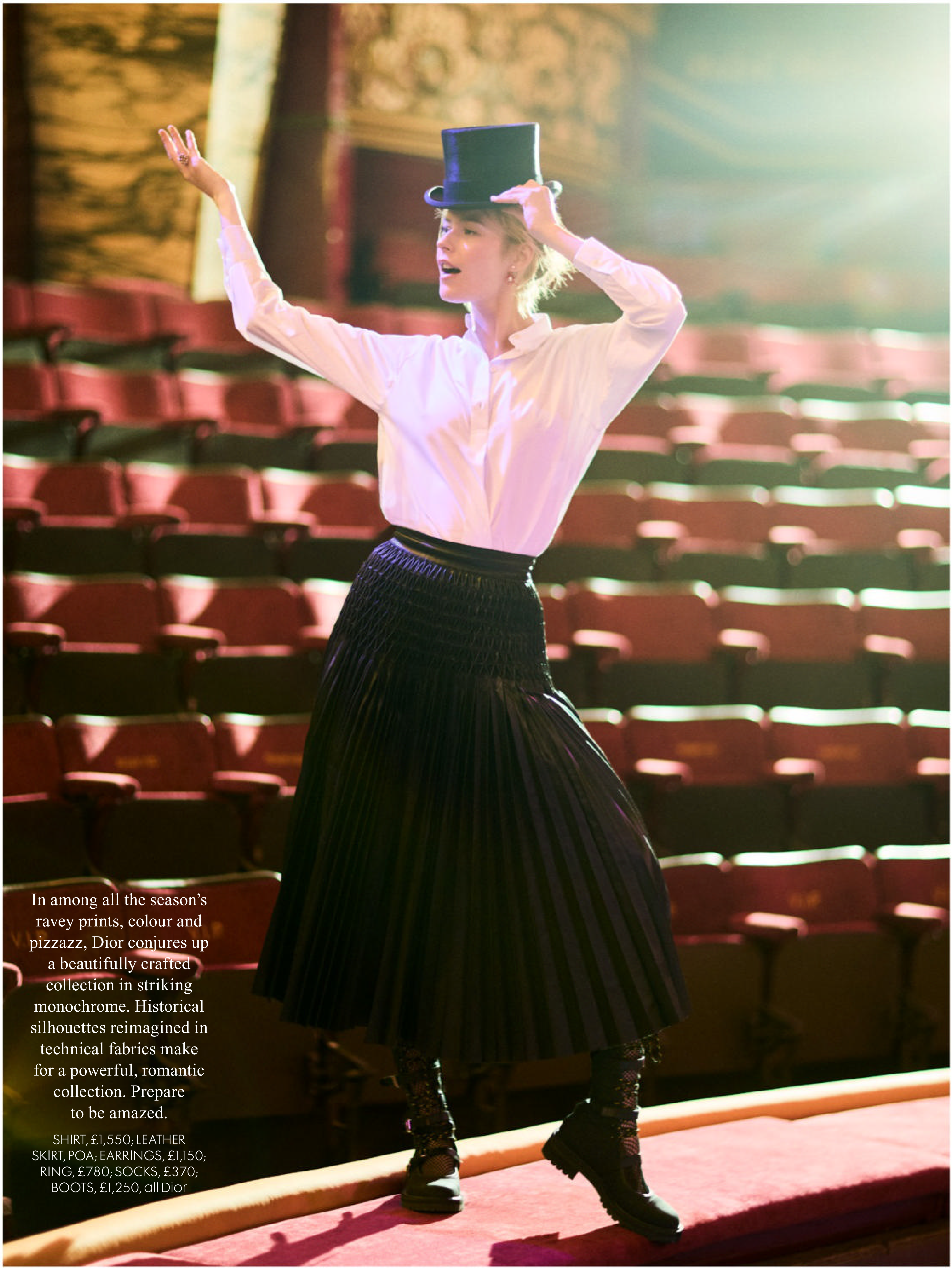
PHOTOGRAPHY: MAGDALENA M/STOCKSY

ROLL UP! ROLL UP!

Photography *Jonty Davies*

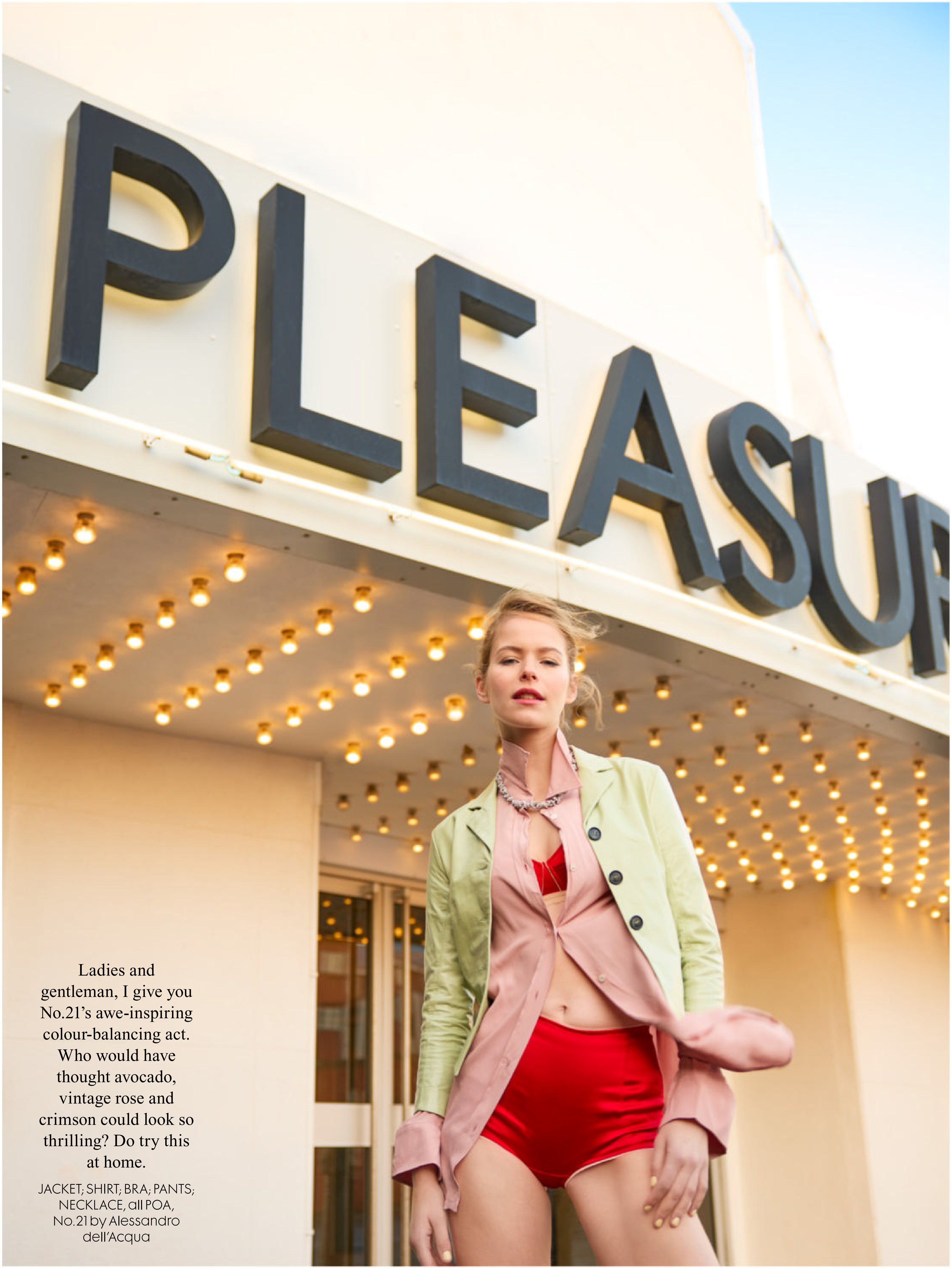
THE SPRING FASHION CIRCUS COMES TO TOWN WITH A ROLLERCOASTER OF SPECTACULAR TRENDS FROM TRAPEZE-GIRL TASSELS TO HIGH-SHINE FABRICS AND SWIRLING, TWIRLING STICK-OF-ROCK PRINTS. IT'S ALL ABOUT SHOWSTOPPER STYLE THIS SEASON, AND WE HAVE FRONT-ROW SEATS

Styling *Oonagh Brennan*



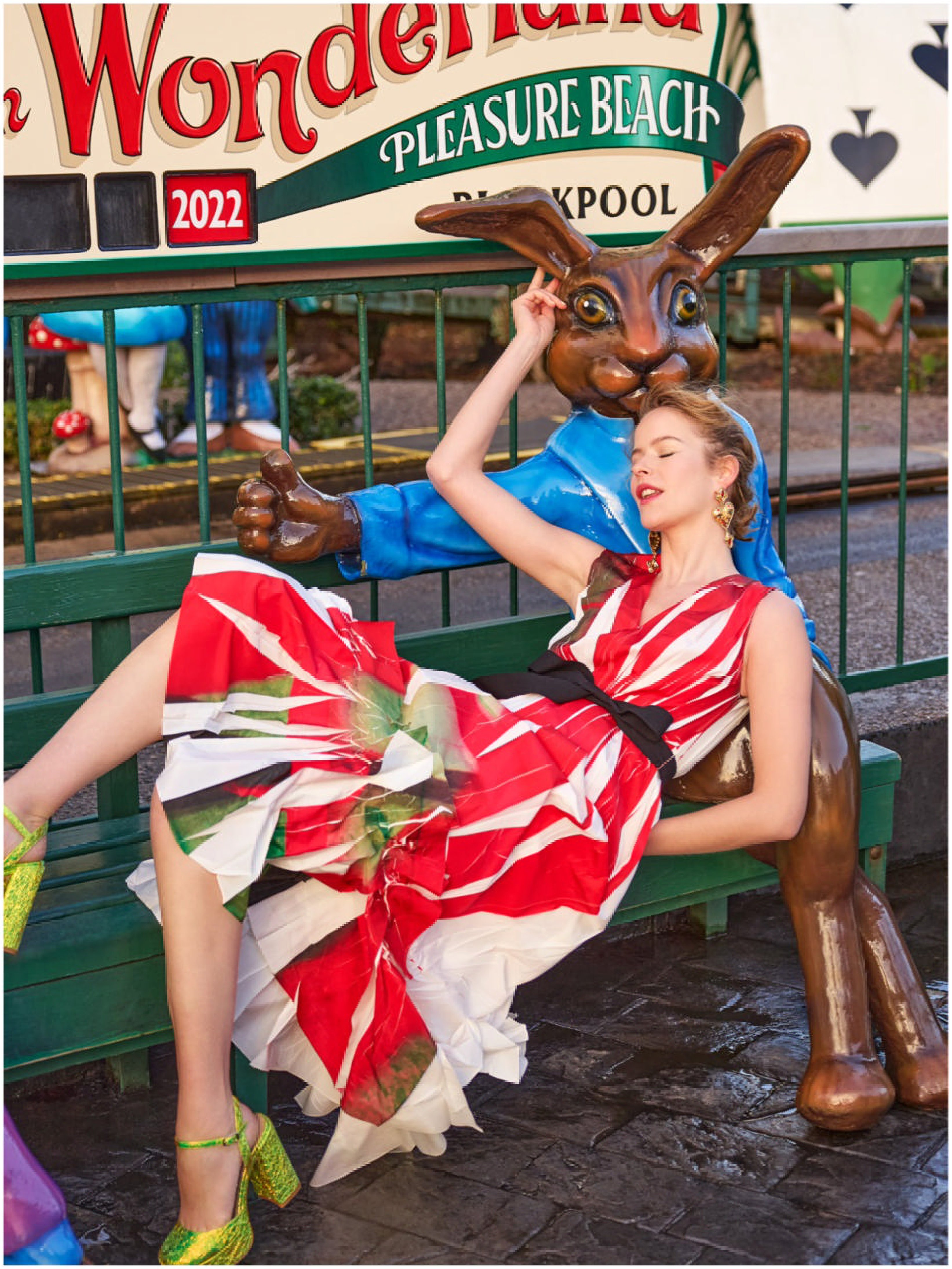
In among all the season's ravey prints, colour and pizzazz, Dior conjures up a beautifully crafted collection in striking monochrome. Historical silhouettes reimagined in technical fabrics make for a powerful, romantic collection. Prepare to be amazed.

SHIRT, £1,550; LEATHER SKIRT, POA; EARRINGS, £1,150; RING, £780; SOCKS, £370; BOOTS, £1,250, all Dior



Ladies and gentleman, I give you No.21's awe-inspiring colour-balancing act. Who would have thought avocado, vintage rose and crimson could look so thrilling? Do try this at home.

JACKET; SHIRT; BRA; PANTS; NECKLACE, all POA, No.21 by Alessandro dell'Acqua



Wonderland
PLEASURE BEACH
2022
KPOOL

Oh, we do like to be beside the seaside, especially when we are wearing Roksanda's delicious raspberry-ripple, swirly-hem maxi dress. With its striking black ribbon belt, it evokes images of Edwardian holidays. Indulge.

DRESS, £1,795, Roksanda. EARRINGS, £135, Susan Caplan. SHOES, £600, Di Minno

The merry-go-round of trends keeps on turning but Paul Smith's signature tailoring remains fabulous and forever in fashion. A chic silk shirt and pleated midi skirt is given a S/S 23 update in a swirly carousel print.

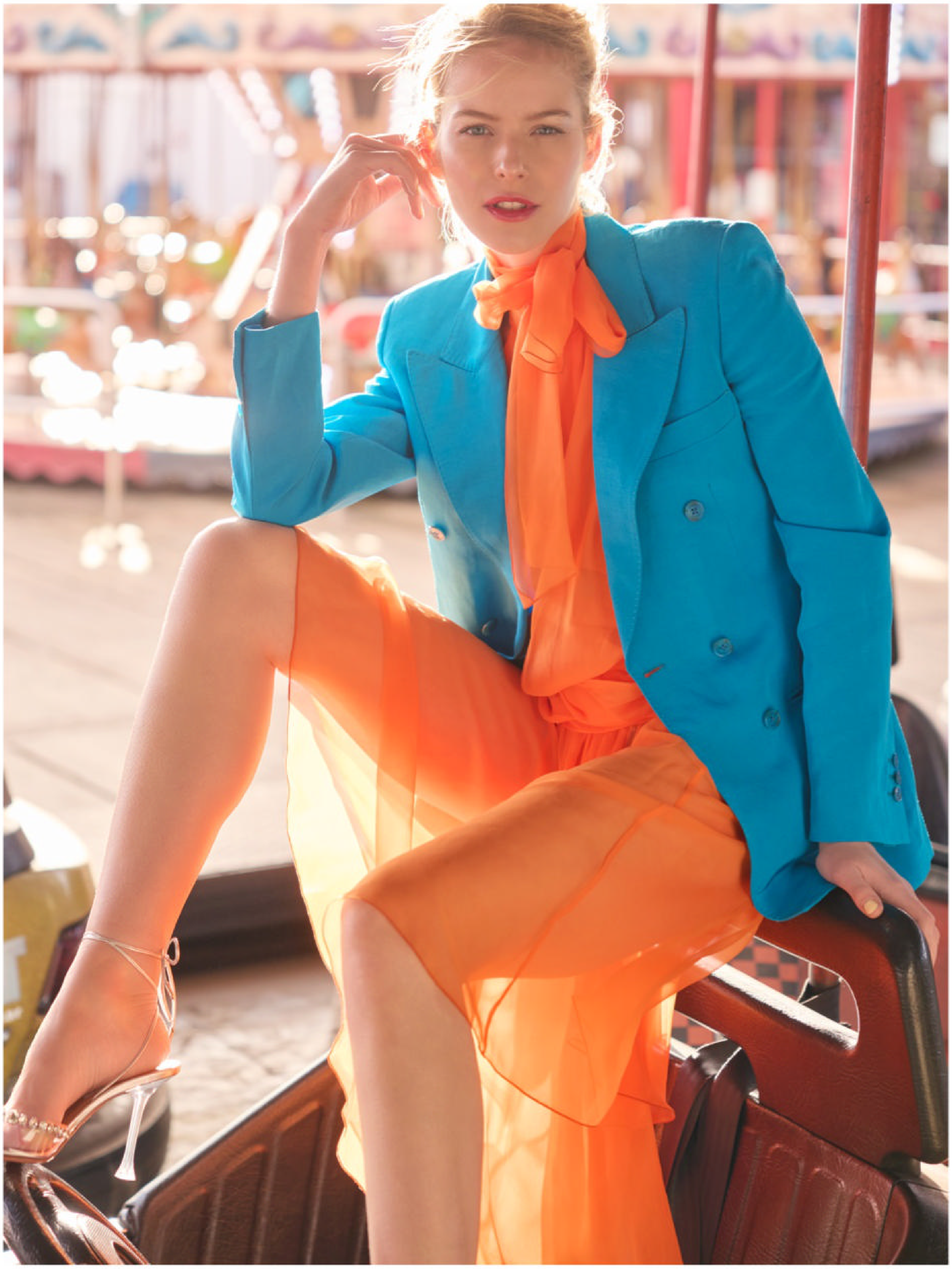
SHIRT, £420; SKIRT, £350, both Paul Smith. EARRING, £38, Butler & Wilson.
SHOES, £725, Manolo Blahnik

Philosophy's blush blazer mini dress with its off-the-shoulder wrap collar and bodice focuses all eyes on your décolleté; don't distract, pull your hair back and let the cut do the talking.

BLAZER DRESS, £820; BRALETTE, £203, both Philosophy di Lorenzo Serafini

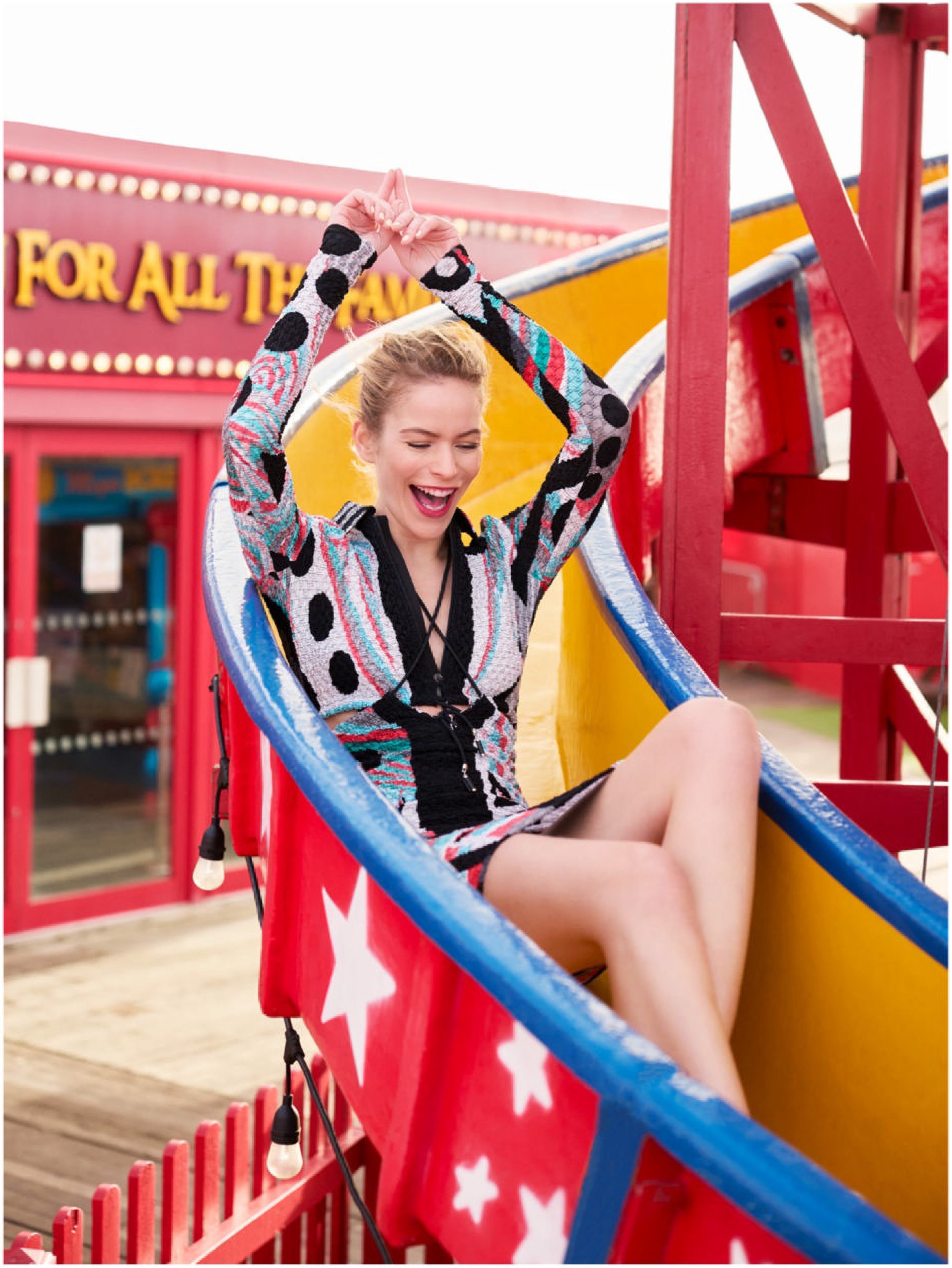
In a season full of magpie moments, Max Mara's sage green cotton drill provides a chic styling base. The new silhouette of a sweeping fishtail skirt and cropped bra top brings glamour to a utility fabric; add a shot of sparkle and sequins for a thoroughly modern mix.

TOP, £295; SKIRT, £620; SHOES, £630, all Max Mara



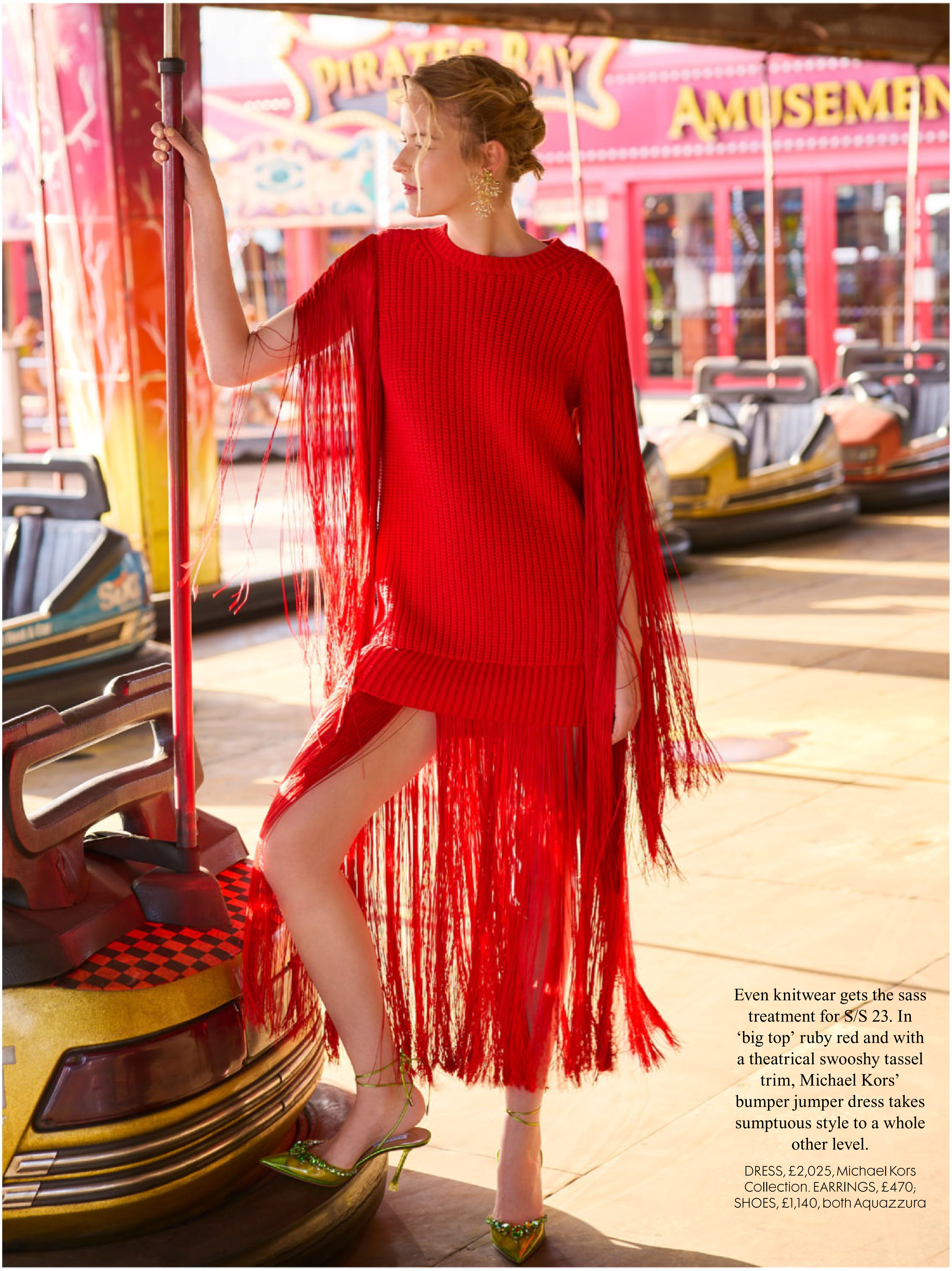
Smart tailoring reimagined in zingy shades and slinky sheer fabrics become status pieces in the hands of Alberta Ferretti.

BLAZER, £1,365; DRESS, £1,610, both Alberta Ferretti. SHOES, £1,140, Aquazzura



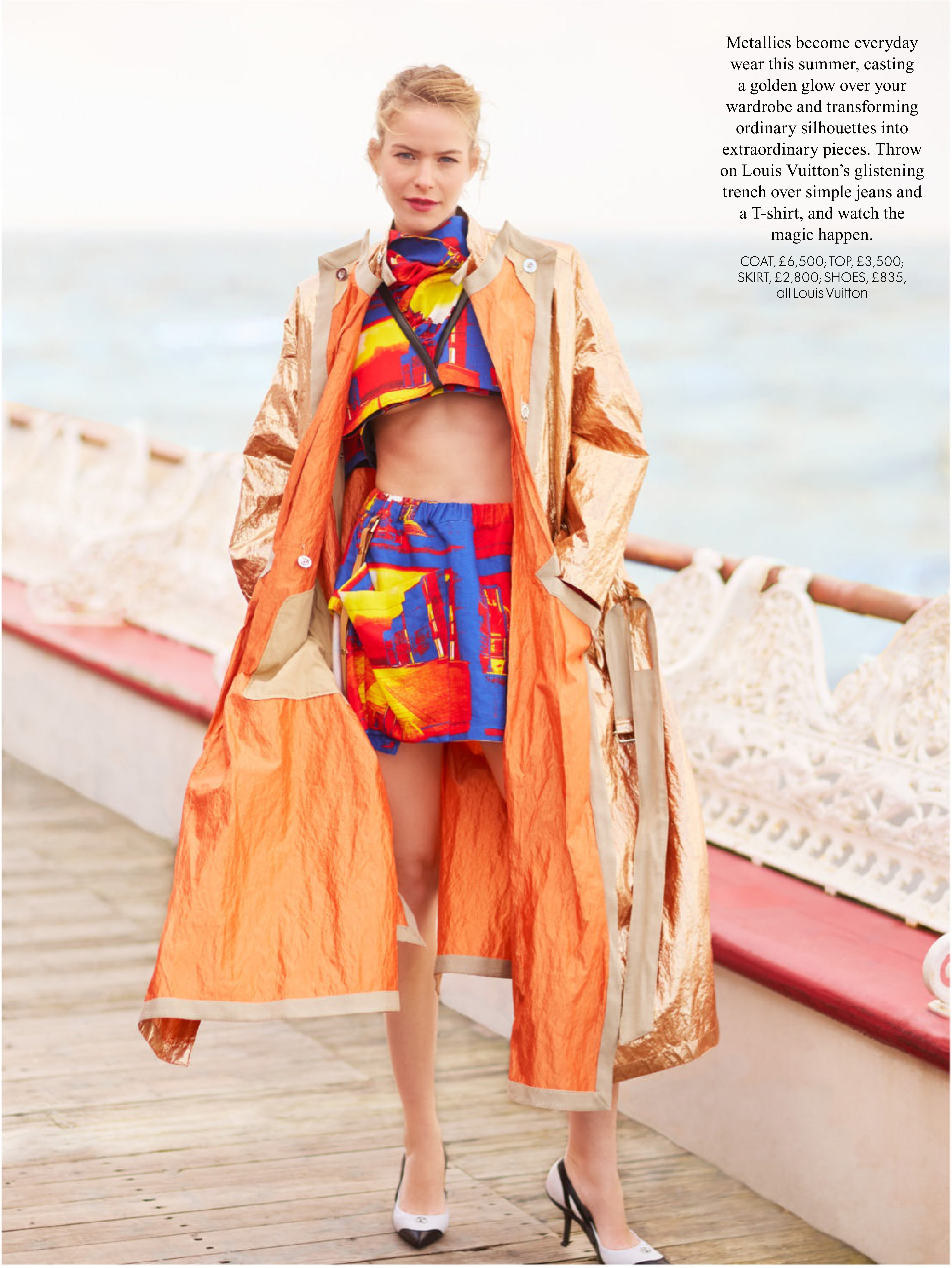
Hermès' racy harlequin-print cropped top and pencil skirt is a helter-skelter of a co-ord, guaranteed to inject some fairground fabulousness into your wardrobe. Wear with chunky black sandals.

TOP, £3,900; SKIRT, £2,200, both Hermès



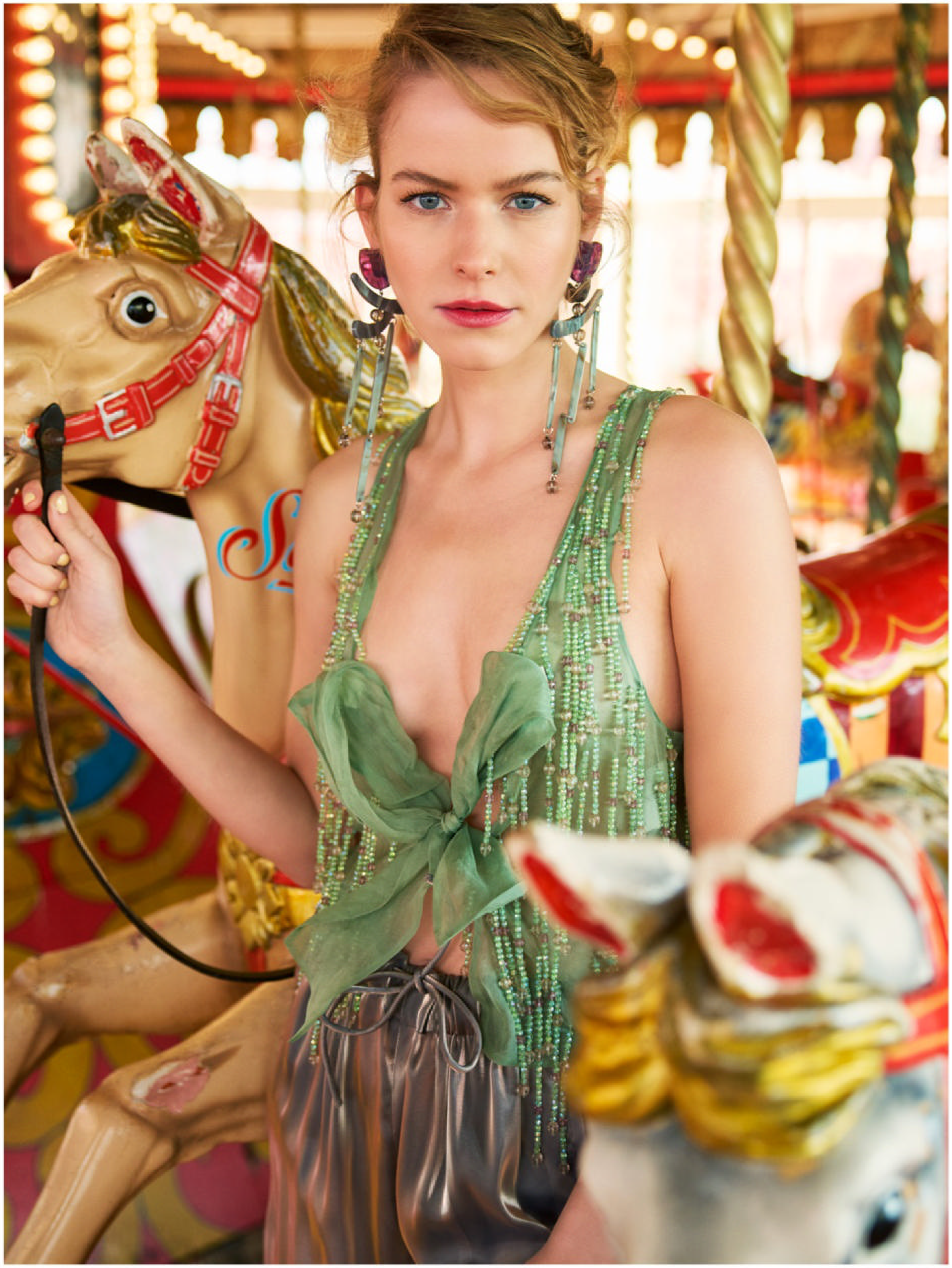
Even knitwear gets the sass treatment for S/S 23. In ‘big top’ ruby red and with a theatrical swooshy tassel trim, Michael Kors’ bumper jumper dress takes sumptuous style to a whole other level.

DRESS, £2,025, Michael Kors Collection. EARRINGS, £470; SHOES, £1,140, both Aquazzura



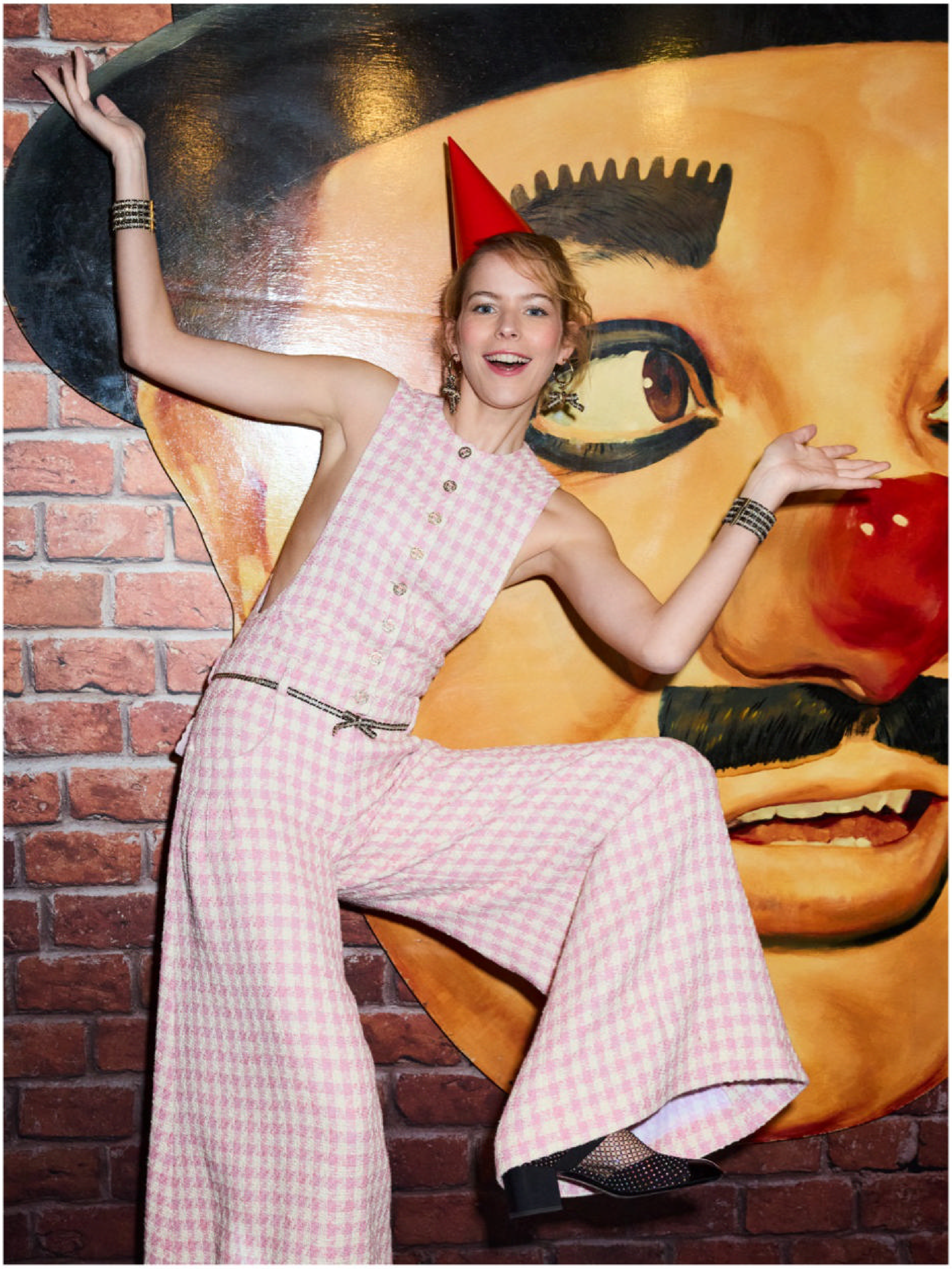
Metallics become everyday wear this summer, casting a golden glow over your wardrobe and transforming ordinary silhouettes into extraordinary pieces. Throw on Louis Vuitton's glistening trench over simple jeans and a T-shirt, and watch the magic happen.

COAT, £6,500; TOP, £3,500; SKIRT, £2,800; SHOES, £835, all Louis Vuitton



Armani's spellbinding lime green tassel top and metallic trousers are the ultimate look-at-me dressing equation.

TOP, £2,000; TROUSERS, £590; EARRINGS, £290, all Emporio Armani



I say, I say, I say… what do you get when you cross candy-floss pink tweed with cutting-edge cool tailoring? Chanel's divine flared jumpsuit, of course. It's a cracker.

JUMPSUIT, £5,790; EARRINGS, £2,745; BRACELETS, £4,485 each; BELT, £3,475; BOOTS, £1,830, all Chanel

The perfect gown has the ability to turn mere mortals into screen sirens. Erdem's delicate yellow frayed-hem gown is waiting to transform you.

DRESS, £2,895, Erdem. EARRINGS, £98, Butler & Wilson. SHOES, £600, Di Minno

STYLIST'S ASSISTANT Corin Ripley HAIR Ben Cooke at Frank Agency and Lockonego using Redken MAKEUP Karina Constantine using Chanel La Voix du Rouge and No.1 de Chanel MODEL Alex H at Premier Model Management PRODUCTION Fiona Andrews WITH THANKS TO the teams at Blackpool Pleasure Beach, Central Pier and Blackpool Tower Circus

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HYRST
Ben and Emma set up Hyrst to make beautiful furniture close to their Suffolk coast home. The business partners with HMP Warren Hill, where they work with inmates and instructors to handcraft homeware.

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BEAUTY

Edited by
Eve Cameron

WHIND ELIXIR
FRAGRANCE
COLLECTION LALLA
LA ROSE EDP, £180
(from 31st March)

whïnd
LALLA LA ROSE
EAU DE PARFUM

A **ROSE** *by any other name…*

…WOULD SMELL AS SWEET – PARTICULARLY WHEN COMBINED WITH UNCTUOUS VANILLA CREAM, FLUFFY MARSHMALLOW AND FRUITY HIGHLIGHTS, AS IT IS IN WHIND’S LALLA LA ROSE EAU DE PARFUM. TAKING ITS INSPIRATION FROM THE RICH RAW MATERIALS OF THE SILK ROAD, THIS SOPHISTICATED FLORAL GOURMAND FRAGRANCE LEAVES IN ITS WAKE A TRAIL OF LOVELINESS, OPTIMISM AND MORE THAN A LITTLE FRISSON OF INTRIGUE.

WORDS: FLEUR FRUZZA

Beauty's NEW LOOK

FROM EASY HAIR REPAIR TO THE BRILLIANT NEW BRANDS TO KNOW, IT'S ALL HERE

MAX FACTOR X PRIYANKA MIRACLE PURE NAIL POLISH IN BOLD ROSEWOOD AND VANILLA SPICE, £6.99 each*

BYREDO KAJAL PENCIL IN AMBIVALENT, £26

MAX FACTOR X PRIYANKA MASTERPIECE EYE PALETTE, £14.99*

MAX FACTOR X PRIYANKA COLOUR ELIXIR LIPSTICK IN INTENSE FLAME, £8.99*

HOURGLASS UNLOCKED SATIN CRÈME LIPSTICK IN LAVA, £37

HOURGLASS UNLOCKED SATIN CRÈME LIPSTICK IN LARCH, £37

BYREDO LIPSTICK IN ON THE FENCE, £40

MERIT BEAUTY FLUSH BALM CHEEK COLOR IN BEVERLY HILLS, £30

BYREDO FIRST EMOTIONS EYESHADOW 5 COLOURS IN STATE OF EMOTIONS, £58

MERIT BEAUTY GREAT SKIN INSTANT GLOW SERUM, £40

Makeup most **wanted**

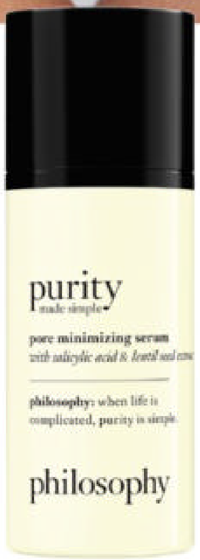
Makeup artist Lucia Pica's first full collection for Byredo brings full-bodied pinks, burgundy and gold; the eyeshadow palette is a particular thing of beauty. New from the US, vegan beauty brand Merit is made for minimalists with an eye for elegance. Hourglass launches its long-awaited line up of buttery lipsticks, and don't miss Max Factor's joyful collaboration with Priyanka Chopra Jonas.

*AVAILABLE FROM SUPERDRUG

On acid

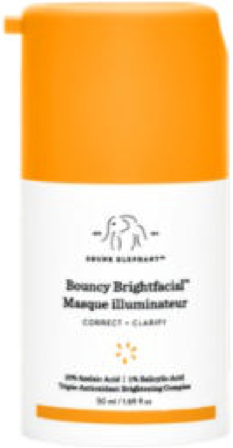
While any dermatologist will tell you that an overuse of exfoliating acids (we're looking at you, glycolic) is behind a rise in skin sensitivity, there are acids they're happy to get behind for treating acne, blemishes and even rosacea. Salicylic acid – which is far from new – is now being used in clever ways that offset its potential to dry the skin while reducing oil production and clearing blocked pores. In Oskia Violet Water 2% BHA Clarifying Treatment Tonic, salicylic acid is paired with prebiotics and pro-vitamin B5 to support the skin's barrier function. Philosophy Purity Made Simple Pore Minimizing Serum uses glycerine to boost hydration, while Balance Me turned to manuka honey, ceramides and squalane for its Pre And Probiotic Cleansing Milk. Best-kept secret azelaic acid has long been loved by experts for its anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties, and to treat rosacea. It's a favourite of cosmetic dermatologist Dr Sam Bunting, who uses it in her does-it-all Flawless Brightly Serum to calm skin and clear pores. You can now also find it (along with salicylic acid) in Drunk Elephant Bouncy Brightfacial, a brightening mask that reduces redness, brightens skin and improves post-blemish scarring. Meanwhile, personalised skincare brand Dermatica has just added it to a roster of prescription-strength ingredients, making punchier options more accessible than ever.

DERMATICA AZELAIC ACID 20% CREAM, £19.99



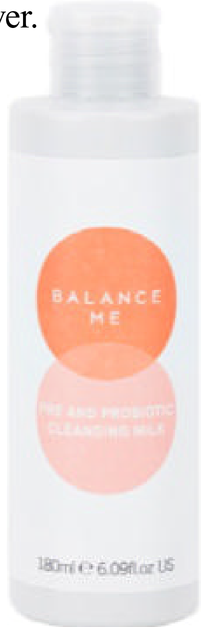
PHILOSOPHY PURITY MADE SIMPLE PORE MINIMIZING SERUM, £30

OSKIA VIOLET WATER 2% BHA CLARIFYING TREATMENT TONIC, £42



DRUNK ELEPHANT BOUNCY BRIGHTFACIAL MASQUE ILLUMINATEUR, £60

DR SAM'S FLAWLESS BRIGHTLY SERUM, £44

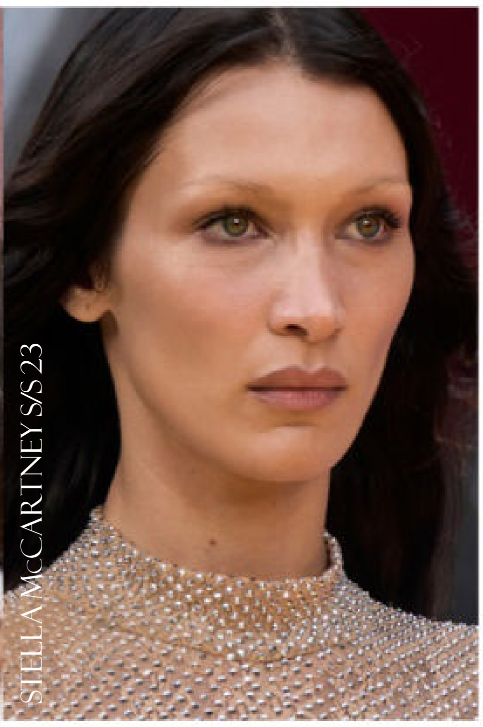


BALANCE ME PRE AND PROBIOTIC CLEANSING MILK FRAGRANCE FREE, £22

Easy on the eye

Eye makeup is going back to basics, with single shades worked all over the lid and pencil blended out with the warmth of a fingertip. Wear with soft matte skin and a muted lip.

ALESSANDRA RICH S/S23


STELLA McCARTNEY S/S23

Vol 1: Kohl comes back

There are gels, there are liquids and there are pens, but kohl – which often takes a backseat amid eyeliner innovations – took centre stage at Alessandra Rich, Louis Vuitton and Stella McCartney. Buffed, scribbled and slightly elongated, it's a little bit smudged and a whole lot lived-in. 'It's so forgiving, and gets better and better as the day goes on,' says makeup artist Victoria Bond. For a subtle winged effect, use a finger to drag and guide up and outwards.

Vol 2: One-shot colour

At Genny and Ujoh, cloud-like, muted colour looked simple but not too sweet. 'Keep colour to the upper lid and don't go overboard on brows,' says Bond. 'Shape them and fill them lightly – this is all about softness.' Finish with a slick of brown mascara to keep things looking low-key.

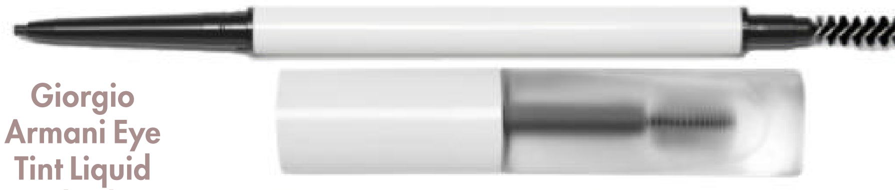
PRISME LIBRE
SKIN-CARING CONCEALER

Givenchy Prisme Libre Skin-Caring Concealer, £36.50 Hides without trace.

Rare Beauty

Rare Beauty Soufflé Matte Lip Cream in Kindness, £21 Air-whipped, muted and melting.

Giorgio Armani Eye Tint Liquid Eyeshadow, £30 (from March) Creamy colour, reformulated for staying power.



Zara The Line-Up Refillable Eyebrow Pencil, £7.99; Beloved Fixing Eyebrow Gel, £9.99 No hard edges here.

VICTORIA BECKHAM

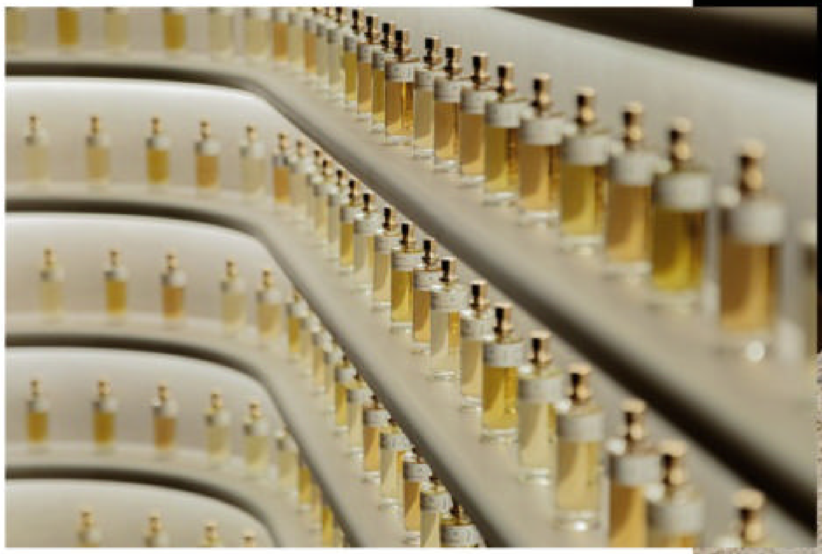
Victoria Beckham Beauty Satin Kajal Liners in Black and Sea Grey, £20 each For clean or smoked-out lines.

stila
All About the Blur
Blurring & Smoothing Primer
Base Lissante et Floutante
1.0 fl. oz./oz. liq./30 ml

Stila All About The Blur Blurring & Smoothing Primer, £32 Soft-focus prep for barely-there makeup.

Clé de Peau Beauté Eye Colour Duo 104, £38 Creamy colour in tonal shades.

Glossier Lash Slick in Brown, £16 For length and separation, now in rich brown.



Natural **rhythm**

To everything there is a season, including beauty. Somerset-based natural perfumer Ffern does everything by the almanac, from seasonal fragrances to the in-house herbal tea served in its tranquil London store. Catch Winter 23 – a delicately chilly blend including sweet orange rind, lavender and osmanthus – while you can, or join the waiting list for Spring 23, due on the March equinox. For body, Hedgerow by Agua takes botanicals from, yes, hedgerows propagated on London's Southbank, and folds them through salves, oils and butters made on-site. Use at home or experience in seasonal treatments at the spa. We're feeling ready for a spring reset right about now...

ABOVE AND ABOVE LEFT: FFERN NATURAL EDP IN WINTER 23, £79. RIGHT, ABOVE RIGHT AND LEFT: HEDGEROW BY AGUA RELIEF BALM, £20; SPACE ESSENCE, £15; REFUGE BLENDED BATH & BODY OIL, £40; HERO SALT, £25; BREATHE BALM, £15

ADEAM S/S23

Everything **illuminated**

Nail illuminators – those lightly pearlised polishes that accentuate the natural pink of the nail bed – speak in a subtle way to the glazed nail trend. Dior was always a step ahead with its iconic Nail Glow, a treatment product that supplies a perkier finish to nails that have had one too many gel manicures. For micro-fine iridescence similar to the sleekest skin highlighter, try Nails.INC Glowing Somewhere.

Vegan
Cruelty free
21 free
Halal friendly
Illuminator
73% PLANT POWER
longwear '21 free'
vegan polish
NAILS.INC
LONDON

Dior
NAIL GLOW

NAILS.INC GLOWING SOMEWHERE, £9; DIOR NAIL GLOW, £25

Bonding **time**

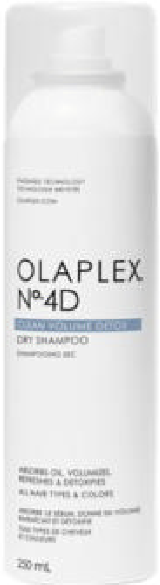
Bonding agents (which strengthen hair from the inside out by reinforcing broken internal links) are the great hope of haircare – and now you can find them in everything from dry shampoo to styling cream.

L'ORÉAL PARIS
ELVIVE
BOND REPAIR
RESCUE PRE-SHAMPOO
12%
SULPHATE FREE
BOND REPAIR
SHAMPOO
5%

WITH EVERY WASH
L'Oréal Paris Elvive Bond Repair, from £11.99 (from 13th March)
Affordable haircare gets a bond-building upgrade, using citric acid, an AHA that's small enough to penetrate the hair cortex and recreate bonds broken by colouring and daily styling.

AVEDA
botanical repair.
bond-building styling creme

WHILE FIGHTING FRIZZ
Aveda Botanical Repair Bond-Building Styling Creme, from £28.50
The brand's plant-based strengthening franchise gets its first styling product, combining bond-building molecules with water-resistant lipids to smooth and protect.



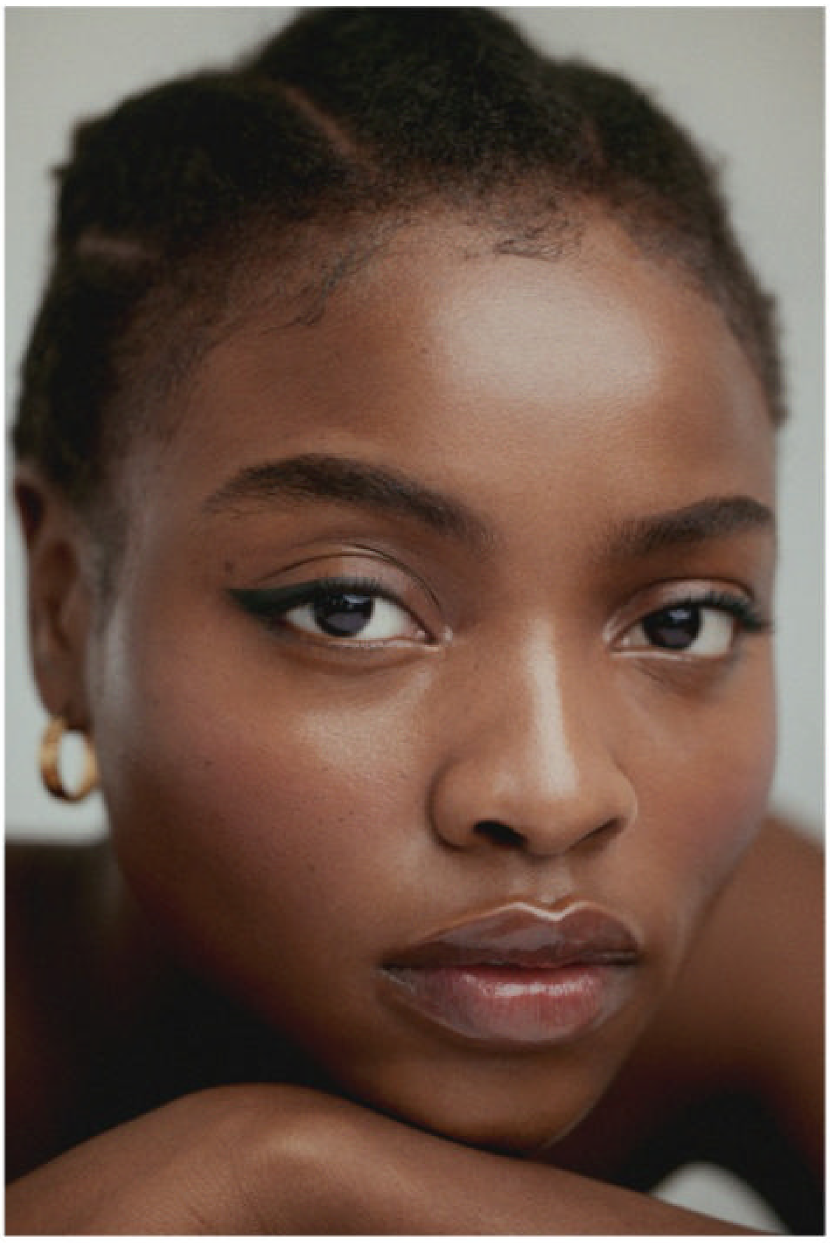
BETWEEN SHAMPOOS
Olaplex No.4D Clean Volume Detox Dry Shampoo, £28
Supercharged with bond-relinking technology, this hair- and scalp-freshening spray works Olaplex's patented magic as it absorbs oil and dirt.

Bumble and bumble
Bb.
Bond-Building
REPAIR
OIL SERUM

FOR BLOW-DRYING
Bumble And Bumble Bond-Building Repair Oil Serum, £35 (from 1st March)
An oil-serum powered by a wildflower honey bond-building complex, to protect from heat styling while detangling, hydrating and boosting elasticity.

The new **facial...**

...works hard to make skin work harder. HydraFacial – the gadget-driven deep cleanse that removes the gunk for a brighter and more even-looking skin tone – is the treatment to request this year, thanks to a smart London showroom offering a first 40-minute treatment for free, and a series of collaborations with covetable brands. Dermalogica and SkinCeuticals were first off the bat; now Omorovicza follows its residency in Liberty's pretty treatment rooms with a national roll-out (from £125 for 60 minutes). In London, the Signature Royal Fern Treatment at The Lanesborough is a non-stop sequence of brisk massage, microcurrent and electro muscle stimulation (EMS), followed by a veil of light-as-air skincare. You'll chat, you'll tingle, you'll walk out positively glowing (£180 for 60 minutes). For a lift that can last for up to a year, the highly anticipated EmFace treatment combines electromagnetic stimulation with radiofrequency to strengthen specific muscle groups and smooth skin by increasing collagen and elastin. At £750 for a 20-minute session, it's an exciting (if expensive) new route to a structural boost without a needle in sight.



In essence

Thicker than toner but thinner than serum, essences are gaining traction in skincare. ‘Originating in Korea centuries ago, they contain gentle botanical ingredients to hydrate, soothe and nourish,’ explains Jin Kwon, founder of K-beauty retailer Tonic15. So why here, why now? Along with K-beauty becoming a category in itself rather than just a trend, says Kwon, we can thank the Western spotlight on barrier repair. ‘The Korean focus is on exactly that,’ says Kwon. ‘For hydration, moisturisation and overall health, essences help tenfold.’ As with everything in skincare, consistency is key, but if you’re wary of introducing yet another step to your routine, an essence can be a great emergency measure to fall back on: Kwon layers on soothing formulas to minimise irritation when her skin feels dehydrated due to stress.

Nourish London Ceramide Moisture Boost Essence, £25 Ceramides, trehalose and hyaluronic acid flood dry skin with moisture.

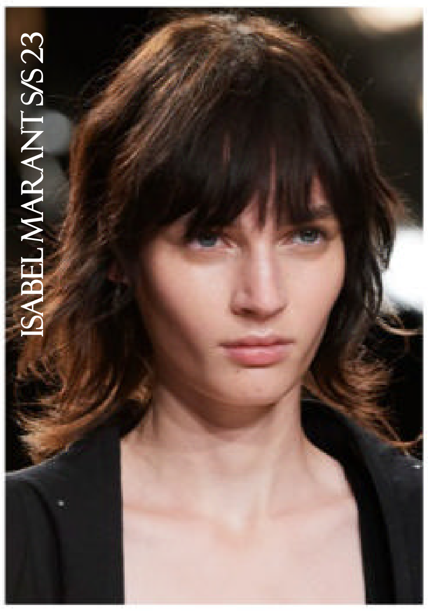
SkinCeuticals Phyto Corrective Essence Mist, £60 A mist to take seriously, this calms and comforts red and inflamed skin.

Ren Perfect Canvas Smooth, Prep & Plump Essence, £43 Plumping skincare meets makeup prep in these barrier-boosting drops.

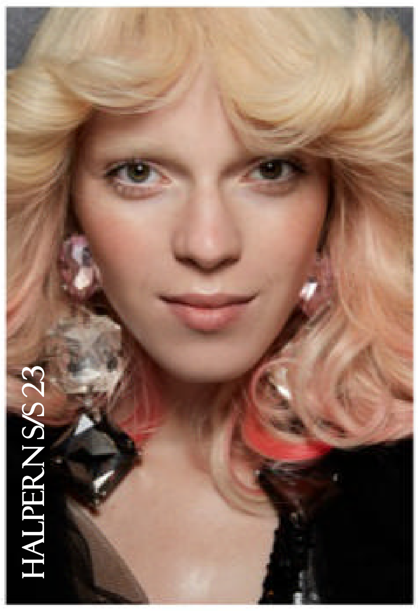
Mazillo Regenerate + Protect Essence Toner, £60 From an indie Bulgarian brand, using botanical stem cells for hydration and bounce.

Feeling groovy

From shags and flicks to retro hues, our love affair with a 1970s-inspired ’do continues…



ISABEL MARANT S/S23



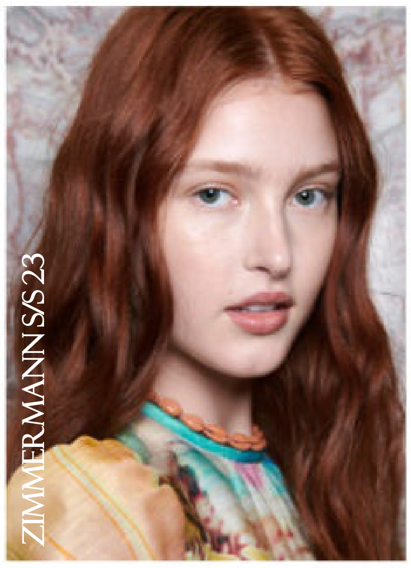
HALPERN S/S23

The cut

‘Seventies-inspired styles are making a comeback,’ says Frédéric Fekkai. ‘We’ve seen a lot of requests for the shaggy bowl cut.’ To keep it contemporary, Fekkai suggests a rounded fringe cut along the eyebrows and curved around to the cheekbones, then layered down to the collarbone. ‘It’s similar to a bob, but with movement.’

The lift

‘Volume is here in a big way,’ declares Sam McKnight of the maximal disco lift he created for Halpern. ‘Keep it modern with a little lick and polish – this volume is luxe and groomed.’ Get the look using Velcro or hot rollers alongside a root-lift formula, lightly layered with styling spray to create texture, too.



ZIMMERMANN S/S23

The colour

‘I call it super-natural,’ says Adam Reed. ‘Think about exaggerated all-over shades that take their cue from your natural hair colour. It’s *Charlie’s Angels* through a 1990s supermodel lens, whether that’s Linda’s vibrant copper or Cindy’s rich brunette. Precise, glossy, solid and expensive-looking.’ In-salon, ask for gentle tints and glosses, then boost shine at home with oils.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: HAIR BY SAM McKNIGHT MODERN HAIRSPRAY, £22; COOL GIRL SUPERLIFT VOLUMISING SPRAY, £26; FEKKAI BRILLIANT GLOSS PERFECTING CRÈME, £12; L’ORÉAL PROFESSIONNEL METAL DETOX PROFESSIONAL CONCENTRATED OIL, £26; ARKIVE THE GOOD HABIT HYBRID OIL, £14

Hello **again**

TikTok's beauty community loves a bit of nostalgia, and when brilliant buys are enjoying a fresh lease of life, so do we.

bene tint
benefit

Benefit Benetint, £16
It launched in 1976, came into its own in the mid to late 1990s, and is a key player in today's 'clean girl' aesthetic for its translucent pink and pretty flush.

moondust
URBAN DECAY

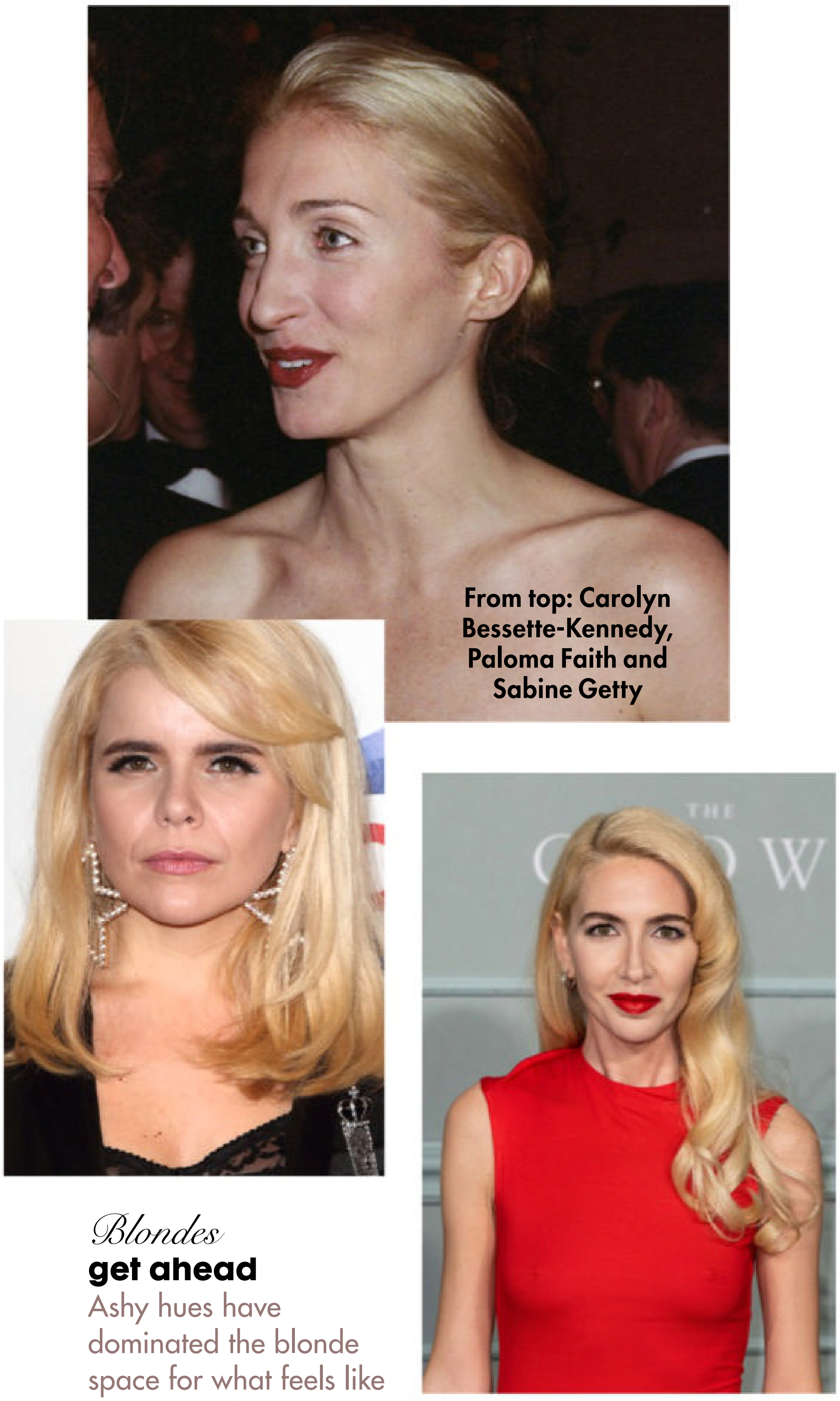
Urban Decay 24/7 Moondust Shadow in Space Cowboy, £18
This microfine sparkle looks more like dew on the lid; get it to get ahead of summer's pending trend for iridescence.

LOVELY
SARAH JESSICA PARKER

Sarah Jessica Parker Lovely, from £22
One of the earliest 'skin scents', thanks to its beautiful musk and powder notes, this Y2K hit is a bestseller again – and a celebrity fragrance we're happy to get behind.

MAX FACTOR X
FULL VOLUME
2000 CALORIE

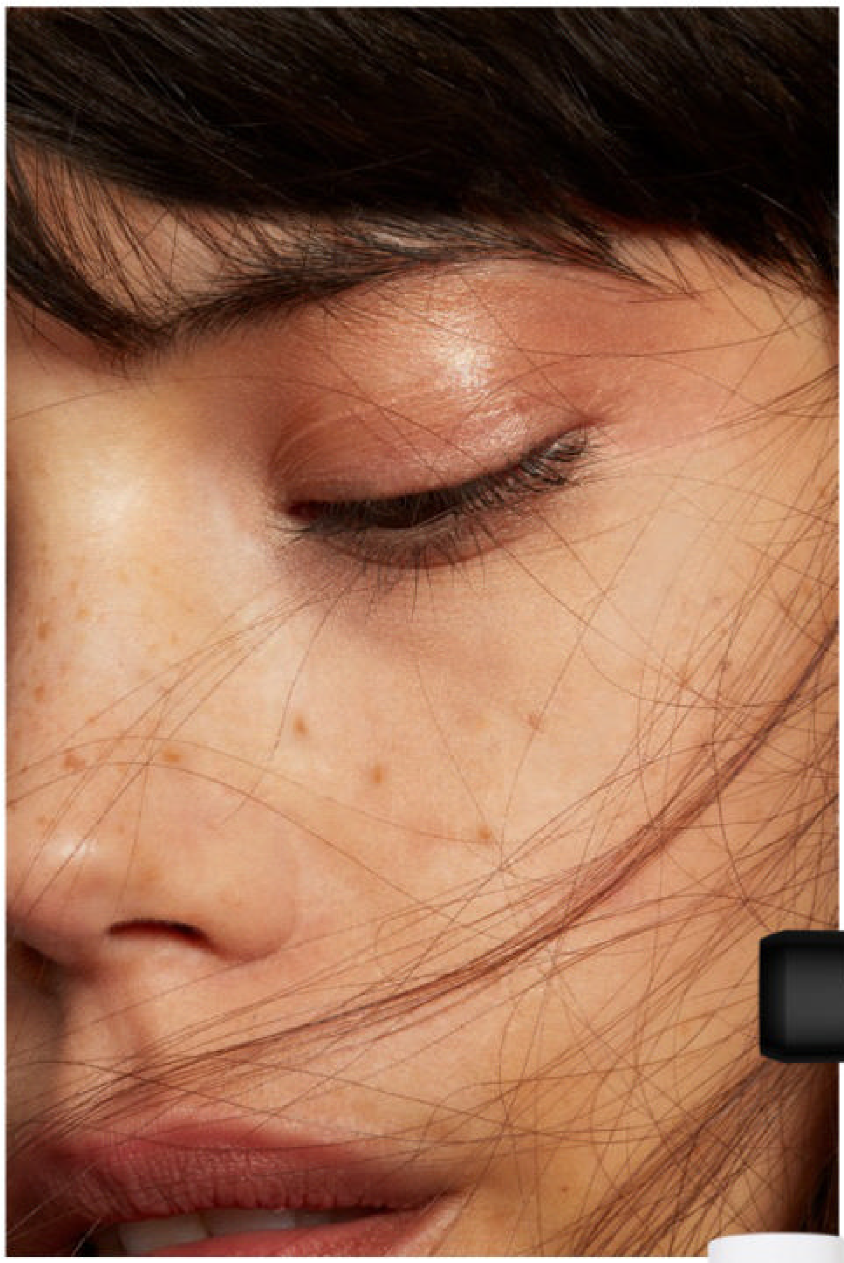
Max Factor 2000 Calorie Mascara, £9.99
Revolutionary when it hit the shelves in 1989 and back with a sleek new look. The brand hasn't messed with the goods inside, which deliver amped-up volume to even fine lashes.



From top: Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, Paloma Faith and Sabine Getty

Blondes **get ahead**

Ashy hues have dominated the blonde space for what feels like an eternity, but now it's time to brighten up, says Zoë Irwin, creative director at John Frieda salons. 'Uptown blonde' is her take on the root-to-tip gold sported by 1990s icon and 'ultimate uptown muse' Carolyn Bessette-Kennedy, singer Paloma Faith and jeweller Sabine Getty. 'It's the antidote to those slate-grey tones all over Instagram,' says Irwin, who calls this new look 'one to light up the room when you walk in'. Colourist Bryony Cairns at Josh Wood is also feeling the shift. 'Ashy tones can make skin look dull, especially in winter; golden tones are brighter on the complexion,' she says. Typically achieved with an all-over tint plus highlights on top, it's a high-maintenance commitment with no tolerance for regrowth. To warm up blonde hair from home – or maintain it between salon visits – put away the purple shampoo and opt for a rich colour-depositing mask. Try Josh Wood Colour Champagne Blonde Gloss, £19.



NO7 4D LIFT & CURL MASCARA, £14.95

EYLURE LONDON SALON EXTENSION LOOK 114, £10

L'ORÉAL PARIS TELESCOPIC LIFT MASCARA, £12.99

More lash than cash

When budgeting bites into beauty spend, lash services are the first to go, say brands that are bringing us salon-like looks without the booking. No7 has created 4D Lift & Curl Mascara as a quick mimic for a lash lift, which elevates from the root to make lashes seem longer, as well as lifted. L'Oréal Paris Telescopic Lift Mascara pulls off the same trick with a brush designed to grab every lash and a formulation that extends by up to 5mm. For the stick-on lash specialists at Eylure, the smart money is on an extension-inspired curl, so that's what they've amplified in their maximalist new line. They're big, bold and worth a flutter.

LA BOUCHE ROUGE EXTRAIT DE PARFUM IN ROSE, £195 (REFILL, £95)

OH MY CREAM SKINCARE MAKE-UP REMOVING OIL, £34

LA BONNE BROSSE N.02, £120

French connection

If easy polish is your thing (and why wouldn't it be?), look to the French beauty brands having a moment in the UK. Concept store Oh My Cream is as serious about skincare as we imagine our Gallic sisters to be. Two London boutiques – there are 22 in France – offer private consultation rooms, excellent facials and an eponymously named line of simple skincare and makeup essentials, also available online. For hair that gleams, La Bonne Brosse, £120, are brushes to buy now and cherish for ever, with a twisted acetate handle designed to develop a patina with age. Choose boar bristles, nylon or both, according to hair type – a diagnostic online quiz will convince you to up your daily strokes for superior hair health. In fragrance, La Bouche Rouge – the brand that brought high-end sustainability into our makeup bags – has bottled upcycled ingredients in refillable handmade leather and vegan leather flacons. Ooh la lovely!

Light **work**

LED light therapy has already made its way out of specialist skin clinics and into our homes, via portable face masks. Now there's an LED device for every part of the body.

The one for whiter teeth

MAHSA TRIO LED LIGHT ACTIVATED 3 IN 1 KIT, £179

A smart bit of kit from name-to-know dentist Mahsa Nejati. Blue light in a gumshield-like device activates the hydrogen peroxide gel to speed up whitening and stain removal, and kill bacteria harmful to gum health, while red light promotes gum repair and cell regeneration.

The one for hair growth

CURRENTBODY SKIN LED HAIR REGROWTH DEVICE, £650

Not only does red light reduce inflammation and the conversion of testosterone to dihydrotestosterone (DHT), both of which can drive hair thinning and loss, it also stimulates hair growth. Results can be seen after 16 weeks of 10 minutes' daily use.

The one for plumper lips

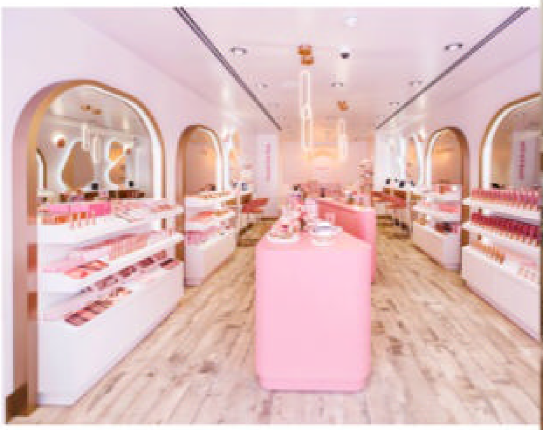
CURRENTBODY SKIN LED LIP PERFECTOR, £149

Packed inside what looks like a baby's dummy are four light wavelengths targeting collagen production and other innate rejuvenation processes. With consistent use, expect somewhat perkier, plumper lips and fewer fine lines around the mouth.

The multitasking one

THE LIGHT SALON BOOST LED COLLAR, £195

Truly versatile, this can be worn around the neck to even out skin texture, on the forehead to soften unloved lines, the chin to dial down hormonal breakouts and the hairline to stimulate hair growth. It can even help to ease tight, aching muscles.



Top of the **shops**

Shopping IRL is on the upswing. Reasons to ditch the world wide web in favour of the world at large include regular workshops and personalisation events at Diptyque's latest lifestyle boutiques at London's Spitalfields Market and Sloane Square (top right), and Sculpted by Aimee's pink wonderland on Dublin's Grafton Street (top), with makeup lessons, virtual try-on screens and recycling points. Also watch out for an avalanche of pop-ups, including (Malin+Goetz)'s NYC apartment-inspired space at the Piccadilly Circus end of Regent Street (above right), which is open until March and plays host to a 'Rum Room' celebrating the brand's much-loved Dark Rum collection. Finally, if ever there was a reason to hot-foot it down to the capital, Sephora opens a UK flagship store later this spring. If that doesn't reignite our love for the high street, we're not sure what will.

Beauty vernacular: **lean luxe**

When high-end treats come without the frills or the high-end price tag: see scented candles from New York fragrance brand Nest in simple frosted jars that double up as water tumblers afterwards, and luxury perfumers The Merchant Of Venice launching a range of single-note fragrances at £60 each.

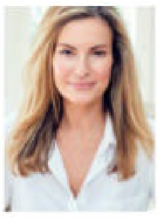
NEST
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
ACCORDI di Profumo
BERGAMOTTO ITALIA
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE
ACCORDI di Profumo
NEROLI MAROCCO

NEST NEW YORK AMALFI LEMON & MINT CLASSIC CANDLE, £45

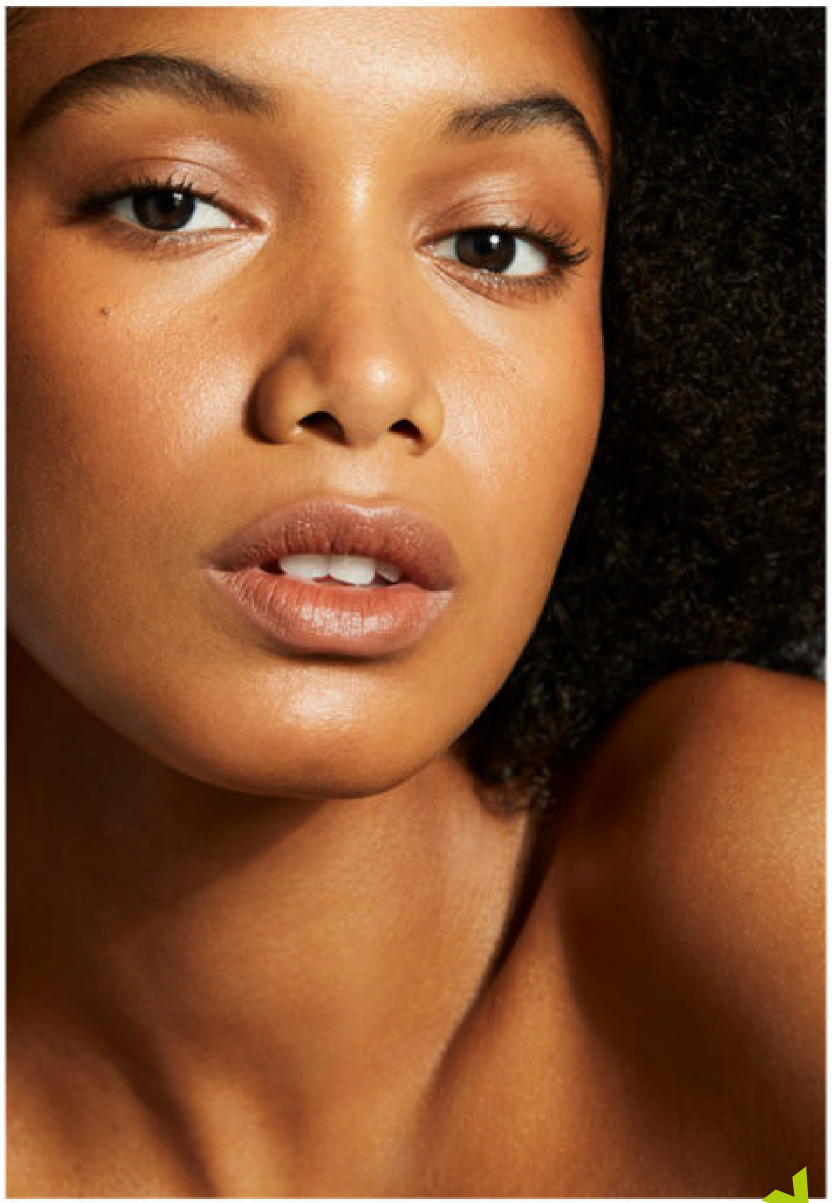
THE MERCHANT OF VENICE ACCORDI DI PROFUMO EDP IN NEROLI MAROCCO AND BERGAMOTTO ITALIA, £60 each

WORDS: ALEXANDRA FRIEND, EVE CAMERON, FLEUR FRUZZA, LUCY PARTINGTON, PHOEBE LEE, ROSIE FITZMAURICE. PHOTOGRAPHY: FRED JACOBS/AUGUST, GALLERYSTOCK, GETTY, IMAXTREE, SALONI AGARWAL/THE LICENSING PROJECT, STEPHANE MURATET, ANDREW POVEDA, EDVINAS BRUZAS, LUCY RICHARDS

THE BEAUTY INFLUENCER



RED'S BEAUTY DIRECTOR EVE CAMERON SHARES A FEW OF HER FAVOURITE NEW BUYS



NEW AND IMPROVED

I bought Sisley's Ecological Compound with my first paycheque many moons ago. Ahead of its time in many respects, it focused on restoring and maintaining the skin's equilibrium, which this year's reformulation amplifies; Centella asiatica now supports the skin barrier even more effectively, thanks to an extraction process making it 3,500 times more concentrated, while new additions burdock and meadowsweet extract encourage the healthiest skin microbiome. The fresh texture and subtle, herbaceous scent remain unchanged and it still feels truly special to use.

Also impressive is Dr Sam Bunting's latest serum, with an up-weighted dose of Granactive Retinoid, aka hydroxypinacolone retinoate. While Granactive Retinoid is said to be faster acting and less irritating than retinol, this formula is intended for regular retinoid users and to be approached with restraint – one pump every other night for a couple of weeks, and then nightly when tolerated.

SISLEY ECOLOGICAL COMPOUND ADVANCED FORMULA, from £118

DR SAM'S FLAWLESS NIGHTLY PRO SERUM, £60

Transform dry lips into soft, pillowy lips

FENTY SKIN PLUSH PUDDIN' INTENSIVE RECOVERY LIP MASK, £18

OMOROVICZA BUDAPEST BATH SALTS, £50; BATH OIL, £45

TO LIFT THE SPIRITS

Never has a bath been as welcome as when the days are still short, and smart beauty brands are creating such bathing loveliness. The mineral-rich offerings from Hungarian brand Omorovicza are inspired by the spa traditions of Budapest; they're bursting with healing salts and herbs to leave body and soul feeling buoyant. Or try Diptyque's newest body wash and sweet trio of soaps from the brand's much-loved Do Son line, with its creamy, gentle tuberose fragrance that's just right for now.

DIPTYQUE DO SON CLEANSING HAND & BODY GEL, £36; PERFUMED SOAPS, £46 FOR 3

Chantecaille Wild Meadows Blush in Apple Blossom, £64
An airy powder for a soft, outdoorsy flush.

RMS Beauty LipLights in Rhapsody and Bisou, £29 each
Nourishing, glossy and with lip-plumping peptides.

OH, YOU PRETTY THINGS

From RMS's artists' tubes to Carolina Herrera's pendant-like eyeshadow cases (they can be clipped on to the brand's bangle, £14) and Chantecaille's visual celebration of nature, makeup has never looked so good.

Carolina Herrera Beauty Chic Mono Eyeshadow in Quartz and Ruby, £26 each
Long-lasting cream-to-powder formulation.

PHOTOGRAPHY: DAVID VENNI, BRI JOHNSON/GALLERY STOCK

Fresh hair

SHOULD EXFOLIATING BE PART OF EVERY HAIRCARE ROUTINE?

Healthy hair starts with a happy scalp – and scalp care is the latest beauty focus to encourage a swishy, bouncy mane. The product vying for a spot in your bathroom cabinet? A purifying scalp scrub. But do you really need one? Well, actually, probably yes.

'The scalp is made of skin, which requires care and maintenance just like the rest of your body,' explains trichologist Eva Proudman. 'Exfoliation helps to remove the build-up of dead skin cells and excess oils to keep it balanced and encourage healthy hair growth.' Think of it as self-care. 'The act of massaging is also therapeutic, and a stress-relieving way to invigorate the scalp,' says Proudman.

Frédéric Fekkai, celebrity hairstylist and founder of haircare brand Fekkai, is also on board, describing a scalp scrub as an essential step in any haircare routine. 'Having a thoroughly cleansed scalp means there is nothing blocking the hair follicles, which allows your hair to grow stronger and longer,' he says. Regular exfoliation of the scalp can help with styling, too, adds Zoë Irwin, creative director at John Frieda salons, who advises all her clients to use one regularly. 'You get a very fresh blow-dry afterwards and it helps to keep volume better – personally, I find that feeling of a cleansed, comfortable scalp quite addictive,' she says. Plus, if you also use a scalp serum to help hair growth, this will allow it to penetrate deeper.

Who might benefit most from adding a scalp scrub to their haircare arsenal? Virtually anyone – though particularly anyone who often experiences dandruff, a dry, itchy or flaky scalp, greasy roots that look weighed down and serial dry shampoo users. Proudman recommends using one once a week: 'If used *too* often, it can strip the scalp of natural oils, which may cause it to overproduce oil to compensate,' she says. Equally, if you have a very sensitive scalp or suffer from psoriasis, it's wise to seek advice from an expert before use.

A scalp scrub should be the first step in your hair cleansing routine. 'Apply it along your centre parting and from ear to ear in a cross shape to ensure you are massaging it evenly throughout your scalp,' Fekkai advises. 'It's even better if you use it with a hair massager, as it's much more effective at removing build-up, providing deeper nourishment and resulting in shinier, strengthened hair strands.' Meanwhile, Irwin likes to use a Manta Hairbrush, £25, and applies a scoop of scrub directly to the brush to avoid wasting product on the lengths of the hair. Leave it on for one to two minutes before rinsing thoroughly and following with either shampoo or conditioner.

Proudman suggests looking for scrubs containing ingredients such as tea tree, peppermint, vitamin E, avocado or coconut oil, which work together to hydrate and stimulate blood flow to the scalp. Salicylic acid can help to dissolve stubborn flakes that trap build-up, adds Fekkai, while apple cider vinegar clarifies and balances the pH of the scalp.

So, which scalp scrubs deliver on their promises? *Red* put 15 through their paces to find five winning formulations…

BEST…
Scalp scrubs

Red
APPROVED
2023

HOW WE TEST

225 testers tried 15 scalp scrubs for two weeks (using once a week) to see which removed product build-up, dirt and excess oil, and left hair feeling refreshed. In the lab, we used a HairMetrix machine to track the scalp pre- and post-trial. We then asked a trichologist to analyse the results, which were fed into the final scores.

CURLSMITH
WASH & SCRUB DETOX SHAMPOO
VEGAN

The winner

Curlsmith Wash & Scrub Detox Shampoo
£23, 83/100

Our winner impressed across the board, with all panellists reporting that their scalps felt cleaner, softer and flake-free. While selling itself as a clarifying shampoo, the powerful micro-exfoliating formula functions like a scrub, working to unclog follicles and remove built-up residue with added apple cider vinegar. Testers found it non-drying and praised the fresh, revitalising fragrance.

FABLE & MANE
SahaScalp
Wild Ginger Purifying Scrub

Best for colour-treated hair

Fable and Mane SahaScalp Wild Ginger Purifying Scrub
£30, 82/100

This purifying scalp scrub lathers like a shampoo, making it easy to apply and rinse off. A little went a long way, with the majority of testers finding their hair felt softer and scalps less irritated post-treatment. It's sulphate- and silicone-free, packed with nourishing natural ingredients and has Himalayan pink salt that goes gently on colour-treated hair.

CHRISTOPHE ROBIN
CLEANSING PURIFYING SCRUB

Best for a clean feel

Christophe Robin Cleansing Purifying Scrub with Sea Salt
£42, 81/100

This sea salt-enriched scrub quickly tackled daily build-up and left scalps feeling refreshed. It's straightforward to use and dispense, although it does require a thorough rinse, so best saved for a weekend soak rather than a rushed midweek morning shower.

Best for hydration

Oribe Serene Scalp Exfoliating Scrub
£47, 81/100

Our testers appreciated the fine nozzle applicator with this scrub, which made it easy to distribute without wasting product. Not only did their hair feel smoother and require less conditioner post-treatment, thanks to a hydrating flower complex, it also remained fresher and more voluminous between washes.

R+Co
CROWN
SCALP SCRUB

Best for sensitive scalps

R+Co Crown Scalp Scrub
£36, 82/100

The fine texture and fresh, citrussy scent of this scrub proved popular with our panellists, who found the treatment improved the overall cleanliness and condition of their scalps. With salicylic acid and kaolin clay to remove build-up and excess oils, there were no reports of dryness or irritation. It's a good buy if you suffer from sensitive skin.

WORDS: ROSIE FITZMAURICE. TESTING WORDS: MILLIE WEST. TESTING: BRIANA MANJARREZ. PHOTOGRAPHY: BJARNE X TAKATA/TRUNK ARCHIVE

FROM SMALL ACTS OF SELF-CARE, GOOD THINGS COME

Oribe Hair Alchemy Strengthening Masque, £63
Plant proteins and fermented botanicals form a protective shield around dull and damaged hair.

Molecule 01 + Guaiac Wood EDT, £95
All the skin-like loveliness of the original Molecule 01 with added super-sexy, smokey woods.

Rudolph Care Açai Body Balm, £49 (ohmycream.co.uk)
Body cream dialled up, with nourishing oils that absorb into the skin with ease (minimal rubbing required).

Kure Bazaar Organic Cuticle Oil, £32
Not just a pretty bottle; 10 rich oils nurture damaged cuticles back to shiny health.

Elemis Pro-Collagen Rose Marine Cream, £94
The much-loved classic gets an upgrade, with soothing floral waters to quench winter-tight skin.

NARS Limited Edition The Multiple in Orgasm, £30
Soft, outdoorsy colour in a pleasingly creamy stick that glides on to the skin.

Sarah Chapman Skinesis Glow On The Go Illuminating Elixir, £38
Skin and soul-soothing oils to roll on to pulse points or atop cheekbones.

Ilia Liquid Light Serum Highlighter, £40
A gently gleaming skin tint with antioxidant algae, for colour that protects against the elements.

Tatcha The Kissu Lip Mask, £25
Balmy restoration for lips in need of comfort, complete with a tiny golden spoon for elevated application.

Omorovicza Queen Oil, £115
Plush, cosseting and rich in omega-3 and omega-6, to curb sensitivity and nurse a compromised skin barrier.

COMPILED BY: PHOEBE LEE. PHOTOGRAPHY: CARINA JAHN/BLAUBLUT-EDITION

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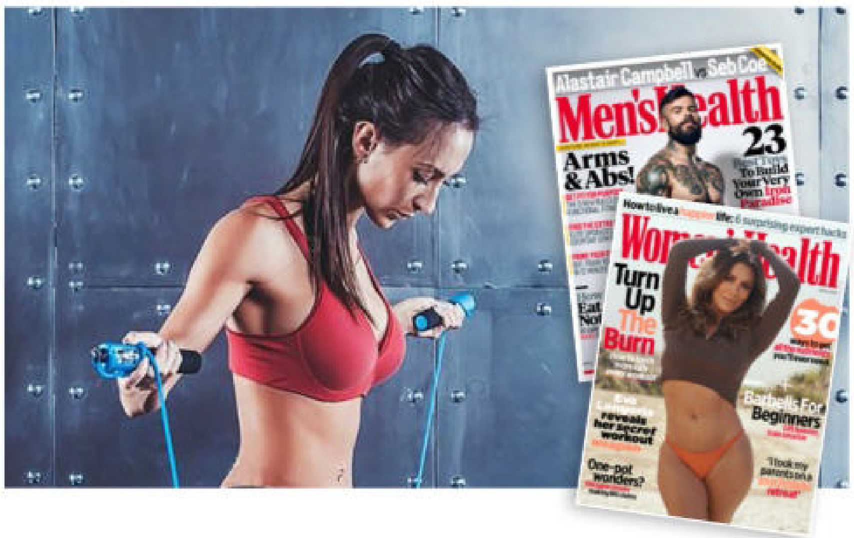
ELLE
BAZAAR

FOR THE TRENDSETTER

Perfect for those who like to keep up to date with our style guides and fashion, plus our limited-edition beauty boxes.



FOR THE FITNESS FANATIC

Workout ideas from top PTs, plus delicious meals and nutrition tips in our magazines and special editions offer the perfect motivation for those looking to achieve their health and fitness goals.

RUNNER'S
COUNTRY LIVING

FOR THE OUTDOORSY TYPE

We have a brilliant selection of magazines for nature lovers, whether they are gardening fanatics or enjoy going for a run, from beginner to professional and everything in between.

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Edited by *Emma Franklin* & *Sarah Keady*

Take it OUTSIDE

Is it too soon to think about those longer (and hopefully warmer) days of sunlight ahead, when we can start contemplating entertaining outside once more? At the beginning of the season, it could be that you seize the chance for an alfresco breakfast or squeeze in an impromptu lunch in the garden – so keep it casual with everyday linens and woven placemats, then add a few key touches, such as loosely tied napkins, simple stems and foraged produce, to enjoy dining in style. Oh, and have a few blankets at the ready, just in case the temperature plummets.

ABSTRACT WATERCOLOUR PICNIC TUMBLER, £15 for a set of 4; NATURAL PLACEMATS, £20 for a set of 4; NAPKIN, £9 for a set of 4; ABSTRACT WATERCOLOUR LEAF PLATTER, £16; ABSTRACT WATERCOLOUR PICNIC SIDE PLATES, £15 for a set of 4; CANDLE HOLDER, £12.50, all Marks & Spencer (all products available from March)

WORDS: SARAH KEADY

NEW *and* NOW

WHETHER YOU'RE RENOVATING OR REDECORATING, TAKE INSPIRATION FROM THIS SEASON'S TRENDS

Words *James Cunningham*

TEXTURED WALLS

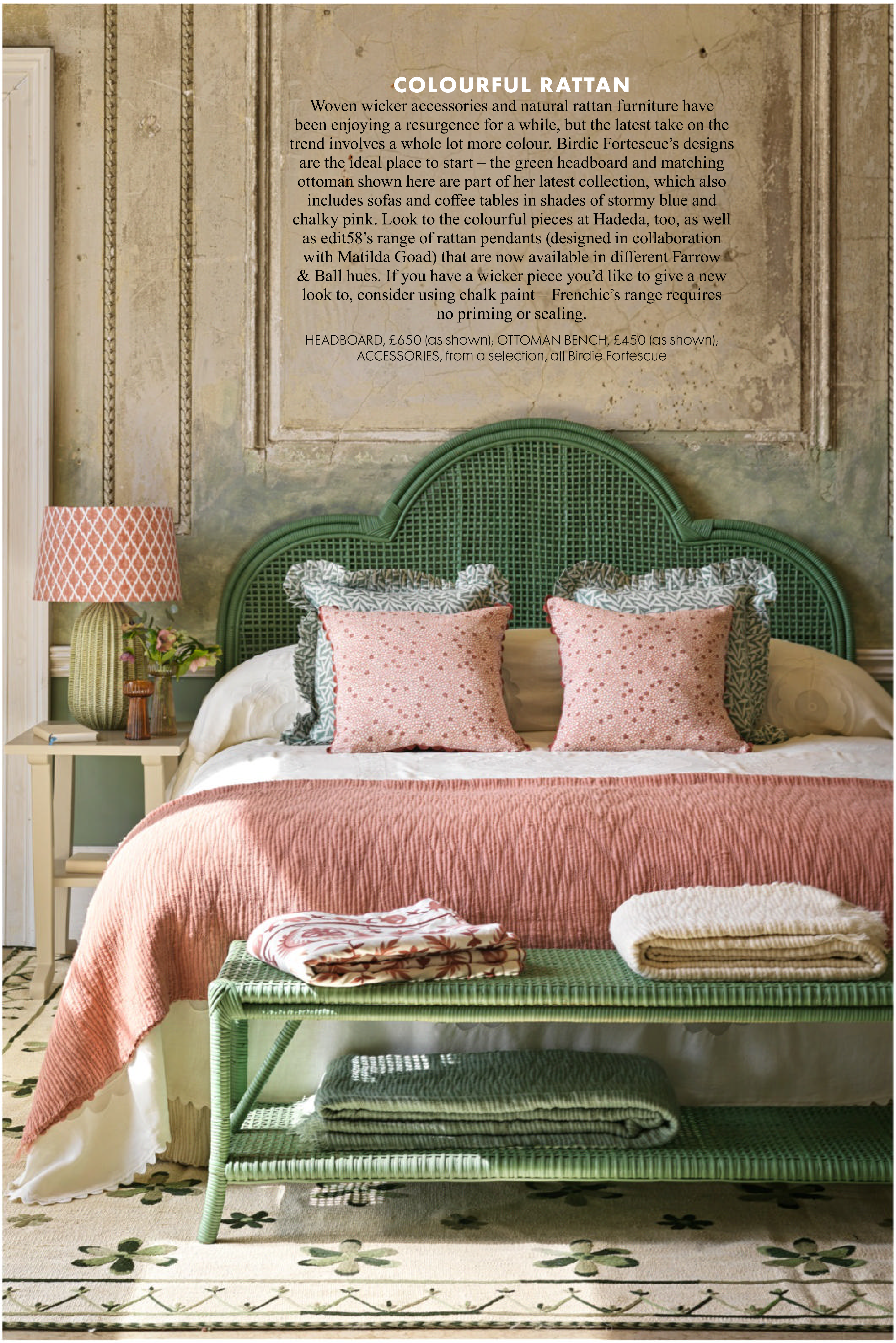
Look beyond traditional paint and wallcoverings to create a modern space. Fabric is transcending soft furnishings and can be used to give walls a cosseting, indulgent feel. Fermoie is the latest brand to offer paper backing on its fabrics, while The Textile Wall Company offers specialist treatment that will see your project, no matter the chosen fabric, from swatch through to completion. Using textured wallpaper is a simpler way to achieve the look and is available in finishes ranging from pared-back grass cloth to more ostentatious embossed designs. Try the options at Graham & Brown, Anaglypta or Arte, whose organic thread-based Edge collection is shown here.

EDGE WALLCOVERING IN OLIVE, £124 a roll, Arte

COLOURFUL RATTAN

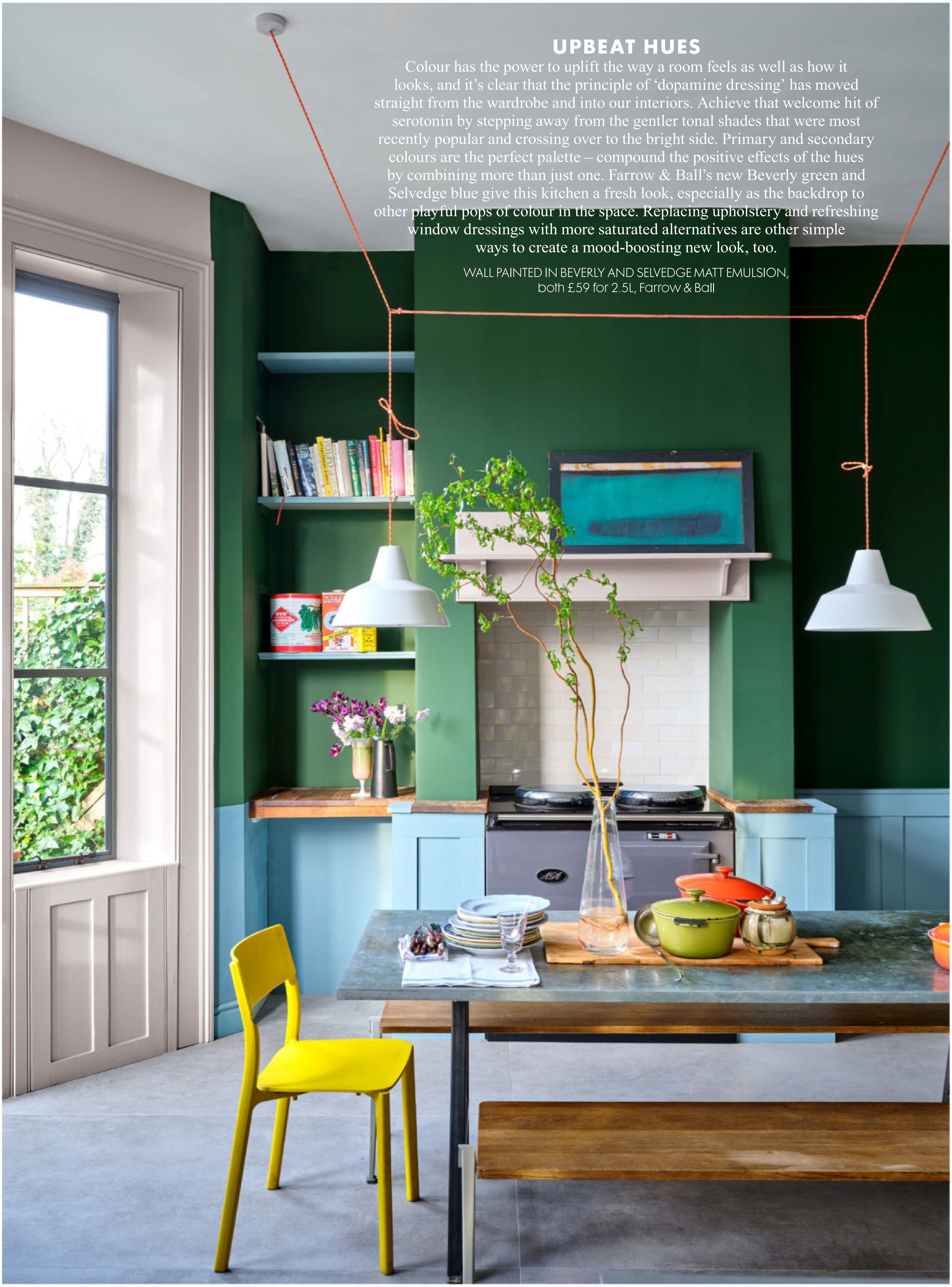
Woven wicker accessories and natural rattan furniture have been enjoying a resurgence for a while, but the latest take on the trend involves a whole lot more colour. Birdie Fortescue's designs are the ideal place to start – the green headboard and matching ottoman shown here are part of her latest collection, which also includes sofas and coffee tables in shades of stormy blue and chalky pink. Look to the colourful pieces at Hadeda, too, as well as edit58's range of rattan pendants (designed in collaboration with Matilda Goad) that are now available in different Farrow & Ball hues. If you have a wicker piece you'd like to give a new look to, consider using chalk paint – Frenchic's range requires no priming or sealing.

HEADBOARD, £650 (as shown); OTTOMAN BENCH, £450 (as shown); ACCESSORIES, from a selection, all Birdie Fortescue

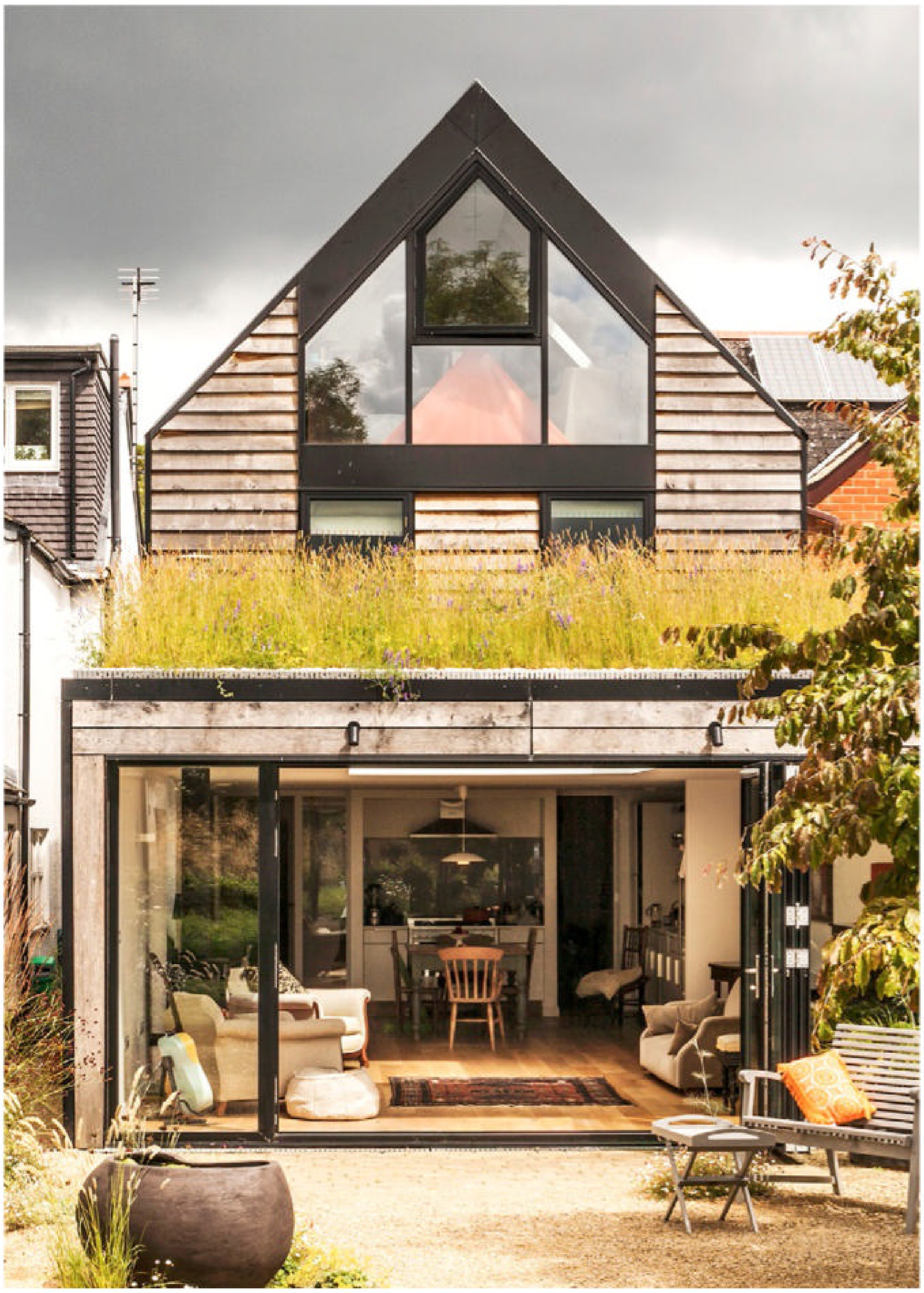


UPBEAT HUES

Colour has the power to uplift the way a room feels as well as how it looks, and it's clear that the principle of 'dopamine dressing' has moved straight from the wardrobe and into our interiors. Achieve that welcome hit of serotonin by stepping away from the gentler tonal shades that were most recently popular and crossing over to the bright side. Primary and secondary colours are the perfect palette – compound the positive effects of the hues by combining more than just one. Farrow & Ball's new Beverly green and Selvedge blue give this kitchen a fresh look, especially as the backdrop to other playful pops of colour in the space. Replacing upholstery and refreshing window dressings with more saturated alternatives are other simple ways to create a mood-boosting new look, too.



WALL PAINTED IN BEVERLY AND SELVEDGE MATT EMULSION, both £59 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball



LIVING ROOF

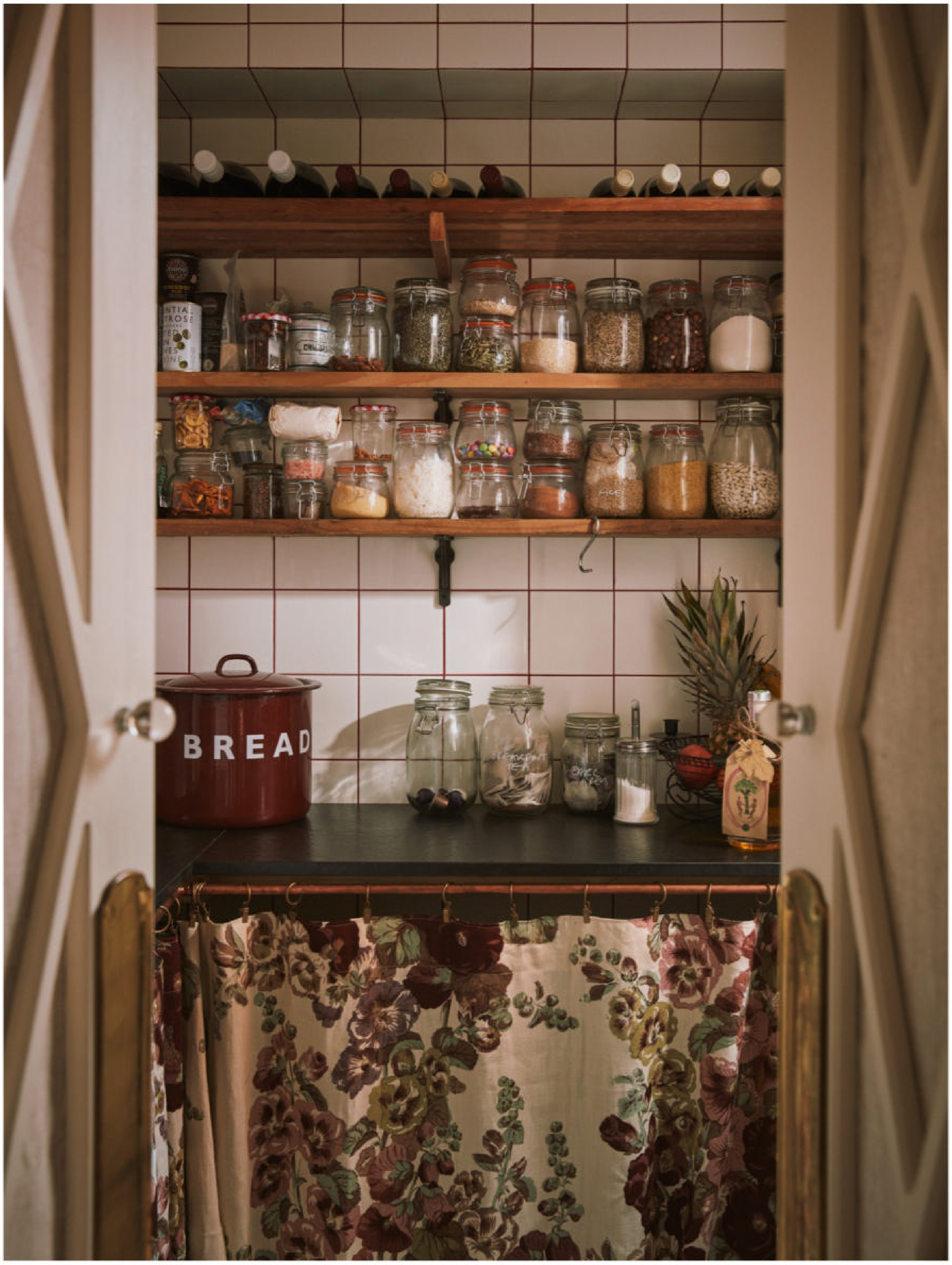
While we most often think about making more sustainable choices inside, the dial has now shifted towards outside spaces, too. A 'green' roof is one where the surface is covered with plants or wildflowers, which can encourage biodiversity and purify the surrounding air while creating an attractive feature out of an otherwise unused space. They are particularly effective on the flat roofs of ground-floor extensions, where greenery can form part of the vista of the windows above. The vegetation is installed using a technique that allows waterproofing and drainage while providing an extra layer of insulation for the rooms below. There are two main types of living roof – extensive (a low, carpet-style level of greenery that has little need for extra watering) and intensive (which features a wider variety of plants but needs much more upkeep).

For expert advice and bespoke projects, try Organic Roofs or Bauder

HANDCRAFTED CERAMICS

The popularity of artisan-produced homeware has ballooned in the past year or so, with some individual makers gaining cult followings online. Ceramics have proved particularly popular, and it's clear to see why – stoneware creates instant visual interest and lends a pleasing contrast of textures to surfaces. On the tabletop, combine with recycled glassware and rustic linen for a layered look. Try KCHossack Pottery for pretty scalloped dishes, Hot Pottery for colourful splattered plates and Naked Clay Ceramics for elevated stoneware mugs. Pots, candle holders and other decorative objects work well dotted around the home – head to DB Ceramic for artfully glazed bud vases (shown below) and consider the traditional Italian designs at Bettina Ceramica for something out of the ordinary. Mix and match different finishes and colours to create a display out of your pieces.

BUD VASES, from £90 each, DB Ceramic



PHOTOGRAPHY: LIVING4MEDIA/VIEW PICTURES, KENSINGTON LAVERNE

KITCHEN PANTRY

While it would be easy to think of a pantry as an antiquated concept, the space is now enjoying a well-deserved renaissance. With home organisation having become somewhat of a lifestyle in itself, a pantry is the most stylish way to store food and drink while keeping your main kitchen area in order. Whether you have the space for a treasure trove of jars, tins and bottles or can only repurpose a small cupboard, take your cue from London-based creative Matilda Goad's masterclass in stylish storage. Her pantry, featured above, includes open shelving populated with an array of clear vessels (ideal for keeping an eye on stock levels of the ingredients within), a handy countertop for the most-used everyday items and space to hide bulkier or less attractive pieces behind a pretty curtain.

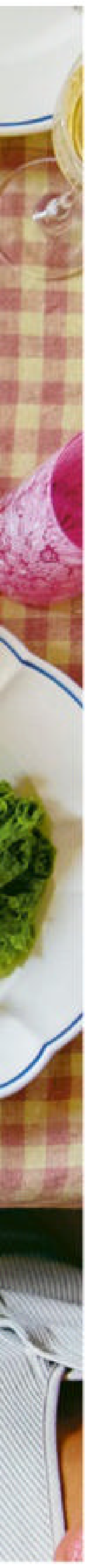
Pantry designed by Matilda Goad

A Table Full Of
LOVE

Recipes and photography *Skye McAlpine*

'It's a cliché that the way to a person's heart is through their stomach; but it's rooted in truth. There is no better way to make someone fall head over heels for you than to cook them a meal. I've come to realise, with time and age, that you don't need to cook an especially good meal (or feel confident in the kitchen), you just need to cook something: it's that simple act of caring, of making time for another (even if all you're doing is making them tea and toast) that touches us. This simple equation of food = love applies to so many facets of life and to so many of the people in our life. I can think of no better way to show a friend how much they mean to me than by baking a cake to celebrate their birthday or making their favourite comfort food to lift their spirits when they're feeling down. There are fewer greater testaments to a parent's love for their children than getting breakfast, lunch, dinner on the table every day. Ultimately, when we cook for someone, we do so because we love them (even if we're just cooking for ourselves, taking the time to do so is one of the greatest acts of self-care) – and conversely, doing so makes our lives richer, because love begets more love.'

~ Skye



Broad beans with feta and almonds

I always keep a bag of broad beans in my freezer, largely so that when I find myself improvising supper, looking for some kind of vegetable to go with steak or roast chicken, I can make this dish. It's simplicity itself. You can play with the beans as you like: dress them simply with a glug of olive oil and a smattering of mint leaves, crumble over some toasted breadcrumbs, if you like (a great way to use up stale bread), or grate in the zest of a lemon and add a generous squeeze of lemon juice along with the olive oil; the acidity is a lovely, zingy complement to the buttery beans. These are every bit as delightful served at room temperature as they are hot and steaming from the pan.

SERVES 4-6
PREPARATION TIME 10min

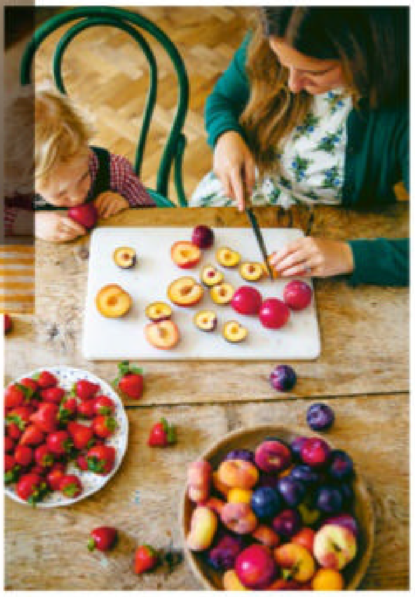
- **½tbsp salted butter**
- **40g flaked almonds**
- **500g frozen broad beans**
- **2-3tbsp olive oil**
- **Small bunch mint, leaves picked and chopped**
- **80g feta**

1 Melt the butter in a small frying pan over medium heat, then add ½tsp salt and the flaked almonds. Fry for 2-3min, shaking from time to time, until the almonds are golden brown. Take the pan off the heat and set to one side.
2 Bring a large pan of water to the boil and salt generously. When the water begins to gallop, add the frozen beans and cook for 3-5min. Drain well, then toss the beans back in the pan. Dress with 2tbsp olive oil and salt to taste (remember that the feta cheese is quite salty, so err on the side of caution).
3 Toss the beans with the mint, then put into a serving dish. Crumble over the feta, scatter with the toasted flaked almonds and dress with one last glug of olive oil, if you like. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Solare
Extra Virgin
Olive Oil

Skye's tip

This dish is great for picnics. Store in an airtight box in the fridge for 1-2 days. Serve at room temperature



Home-made food is the ultimate act of love, and is the key to anyone's heart, says Skye

Rhubarb and Cheddar tart

It's the sugar-pink of the rhubarb blushing under a blanket of melted Cheddar that makes this feel like romantic food for me; though it's the flavour – rhubarb's intense, earthy sourness counterbalanced by rich, buttery pastry and melting cheese – that makes me long to eat it. As much as you might associate rhubarb with puddings, don't be fooled: this is very much a savoury business. This works best with long, thin, furiously pink rhubarb stems rather than the fatter ones, which take longer to cook and can taste a little too sharp. To go with it, you only need a salad: I can't resist pairing with a similarly pastel-hued salad of blush-pink radicchio rosa or dark red bitter chicory.

SERVES 4-6
PREPARATION TIME 10min, plus cooling
COOKING TIME 25-30min

- **325g sheet ready-rolled all-butter puff pastry**
- **1 egg, lightly beaten**
- **250g mascarpone**
- **2tbsp finely grated Parmesan**
- **400g thin stems bright pink rhubarb**
- **1tbsp caster sugar**
- **130g Cheddar, grated**
- **Small bunch thyme, leaves picked**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Line a baking tray with baking parchment and unroll the pastry on to the tray. Use a sharp knife to score a 2-3cm border around the edge, then prick all over the centre part with a fork.
2 Brush the pastry edge with egg, then line centre with baking parchment and baking beans. Blind bake in the oven for 10min, until dry to the touch and lightly golden at the edges. Leave to cool for 10min or so.
3 In a small bowl, combine the mascarpone with the Parmesan and season generously. Spoon the mascarpone over the middle of the tart and spread it out as evenly as you can. If the pastry is puffed up in the middle, just press it down gently with your hands and spoon the mascarpone on top. Cut the rhubarb into pieces, roughly 16cm long, and arrange snugly, side by side like soldiers, over the mascarpone. Sprinkle the sugar over the rhubarb, then top with the grated Cheddar. Lastly, scatter over a few thyme leaves.
4 Cook in the oven for 15-20min, until the cheese is melted and the rhubarb is tender. Serve warm.

Skye's tip

This travels most easily on the tray it was baked on, covered with reusable food wrap. It keeps for up to 2 days in the fridge; warm gently in the oven to serve

Roast duck legs with winter citrus

I love duck cooked this way: the skin crisp like charred paper and the meat meltingly tender. The potatoes and the orange (sliced thin) cook in the same pan as the duck, and infuse with the flavoursome fat from the legs as they roast, intermingling with the sweet juices from the fruit. My preference is to arrange the slices of orange under the meat, as far as possible, which means that they soften and tenderise rather than crisp and turn bitter as they cook. It's one of those delightful one-pan dishes that constitutes a complete meal in itself, though I often serve it with a bitter leaf salad on the side, dressed with a little olive oil, a squeeze of lemon juice and a generous sprinkling of salt.

SERVES 2
PREPARATION TIME 20min, plus resting
COOKING TIME 1hr 20min

- **2 duck legs**
- **2 large potatoes (total weight 300-350g)**
- **1 large orange**
- **Small bunch thyme**

1 Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5. Fry the duck legs, skin side down, in a large pan (ideally one with a heatproof handle) for 3-5min, until the skin is browned all over. Take the pan off the heat, lift the duck legs on to a plate and set to one side.

2 Thinly slice the potatoes and the orange into rounds, roughly 5mm thick. Arrange most of the slices of orange in the centre of the same pan, and lay the duck on top, skin-side up. Arrange the potatoes overlapping in a single layer all around the duck and oranges, with the remaining slices of orange peeking out here and there.

3 Season everything liberally with salt and pepper, sprinkling over a few thyme sprigs. Roast in the oven for 1¼hr, or until both the duck legs and the potatoes are golden and exquisitely crisp. Rest for 10min before serving.

Fregola sarda with seafood

Fregola is a Sardinian pasta that comes in the shape of little pea-sized balls; you'll sometimes see it in shops labelled as Italian or Sardinian couscous. If you can't find it, then giant couscous will do very well (follow the cooking instructions on the packet). I've used frozen seafood in this recipe simply for ease; I keep bags of it in the freezer and take disproportionate delight in the fact that doing so means I can improvise this sort of sumptuous supper effortlessly and at the last minute.

SERVES 2
PREPARATION TIME 15min
COOK TIME 15min

- **2 vegetable stock cubes**
- **160g fregola sarda**
- **3tbsp olive oil**
- **200g baby tomatoes, halved**
- **300g frozen mixed seafood**
- **40ml white wine**
- **Leaves from a small bunch of parsley, chopped**

1 Bring a large pan of generously salted water to the boil. When the water begins to gallop, crumble in the stock cubes and give it a good stir to dissolve them. Add the fregola and cook for 6-8min. Drain in a colander and set to one side.
2 Meanwhile, heat 2tbsp olive oil in a large frying pan, toss in ½ the tomatoes and cook over high heat for 2-3min, until they begin to cook down. Add the frozen seafood and cook for 6-8min to defrost it fully.
3 Pour in the wine, add the last of the tomatoes and the parsley and cook for 1-2min, just long enough for the new tomatoes to tenderise slightly and for some of the juices to cook off. Add the cooked fregola to the pan and give everything a good stir to combine.
4 Keep the pan over high heat until warmed through, then take off the heat, drizzle over the last 1tbsp olive oil, and season to taste with a little salt and a good grinding of pepper before serving.

Raspberry and marzipan cake

There is no better present to give someone on their birthday than a home-made birthday cake. The recipe below is a go-to of mine, a vision of delicate, picture-perfect pink, made with raspberries rather than food colouring so you can taste the colour. The marzipan sponge and icing are both wonderfully light and fluffy – even people who think they don't like marzipan love this cake.

SERVES 10-12
PREPARATION TIME 35min, plus cooling
COOKING TIME 50-60min

FOR THE CAKE

- **300g salted butter, softened, plus more for the tins**
- **340g caster sugar**
- **270g marzipan, grated**
- **8 eggs**
- **180g self-raising flour**

FOR THE FILLING AND ICING

- **370g raspberries**
- **450g icing sugar, plus 2 heaped tbsp**
- **120g marzipan, grated**
- **230g salted butter, softened**

1 Preheat oven to 170°C (150°C fan) mark 3½. Butter and line 2 x 23cm round cake tins. Combine the caster sugar, marzipan and a generous pinch of salt in a food processor and blitz to something resembling sand. Add the butter and blitz until smooth.

2 Add the eggs, one at a time, blitzing after each addition to make a smooth batter. Add the flour and blitz again until thoroughly blended.

3 Divide batter equally between the prepared tins and bake for 50-60min until lightly golden on top and a knife comes out clean when inserted in the middle. Cool in the tins for 20min or so, then turn out on to a wire rack and cool completely.

4 To make the icing, combine 120g raspberries in a food processor with the 2 heaped tbsp of icing sugar and blitz to a smooth purée. Strain purée through a sieve. Discard the seeds and set the deep pink liquid to one side.

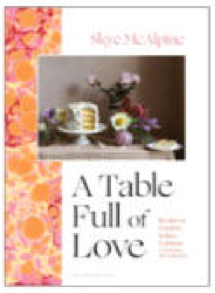
5 In a small bowl, add 3tbsp boiling water to the marzipan and mix with a fork to melt slightly (this stops it going lumpy when added to the buttercream).

6 In a second, large bowl, use a handheld electric whisk to mix the 450g icing sugar and the butter until pale and fluffy, then add the marzipan and beat until smooth. Add a dash of raspberry purée and beat, then add more, depending on what intensity of colour and flavour you like.

7 Spoon a large dollop of the pink icing over the first cake and spread it out evenly, then top with a layer of fresh raspberries. Sandwich the second cake on top and smother with the remaining icing and raspberries, then serve.

Skye's tip

While the cake tastes best on the day of baking, it will keep happily in an airtight container in a cool place for 2-3 days



A Table Full Of Love (Bloomsbury) by Skye McAlpine is out 2nd February 2023. Photography © Skye McAlpine

PHOTOGRAPHY: © SKYE MCALPINE. PORTRAIT: LAURA CREYKE

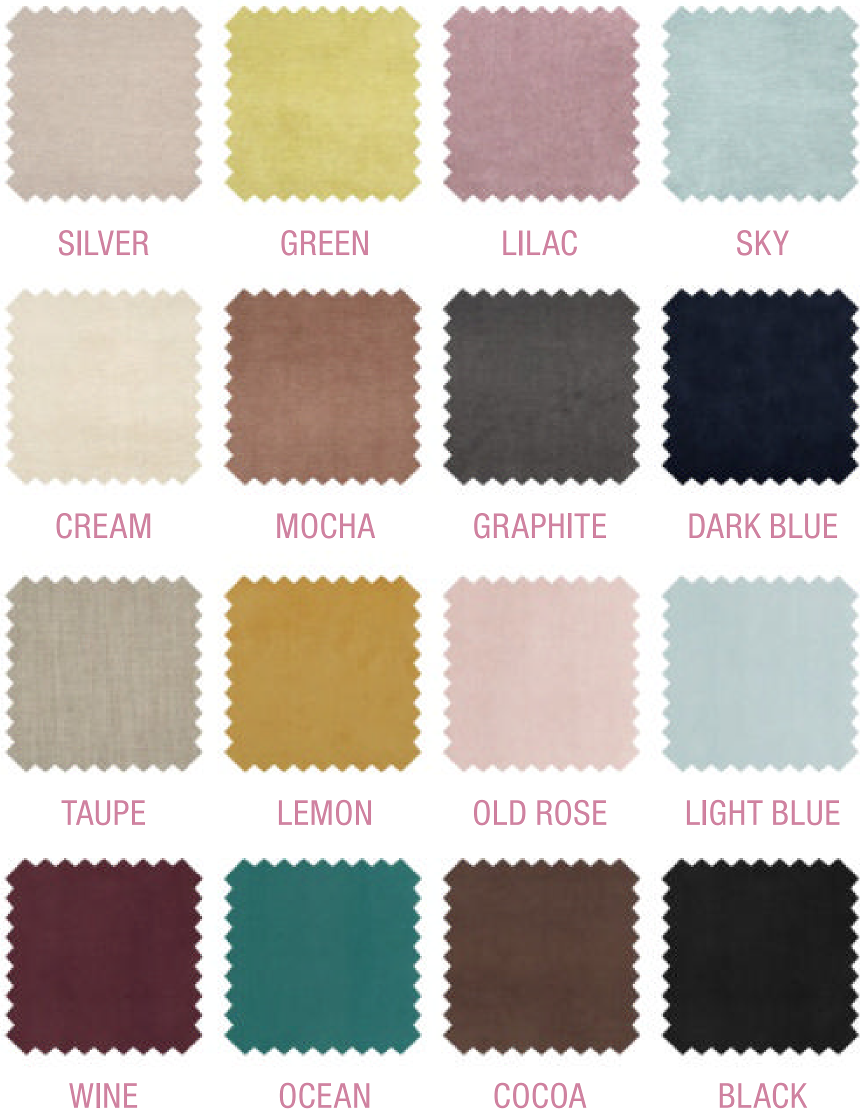
HOUSE BEAUTIFUL FREYA EXCLUSIVELY AT **DFS**

Meet the versatile, comfortable and stylish sofa that comes in all the colours of the rainbow

The *House Beautiful* Collection at DFS has been specially created with modern living in mind. Each sofa is handcrafted to order, and blends sleek lines and comfortable curves with quality fabrics and premium hardwood frames to bring long-lasting, flexible and contemporary style to every home.

Take Freya, for example. For starters, it comes in 16 colours, ranging from paler Silver, Cream and Sky through to darker, moodier Graphite, Cocoa and Black, so you're bound to find one to suit. Good looks aside, Freya is also uber-comfy. Generously proportioned, it has gorgeous, soft fabric, gently angled arms and deep, foam-filled seat and back cushions that give maximum support while needing minimal plumping. Whatever your space, you'll find your perfect Freya because, as well as sofas, the range includes loungers with lift-up storage or fixed chaise ends, corner sofas, sofa beds, swivel chairs, cuddlers and more. And each piece comes with the brilliant DFS 15-year frame and frame springs guarantee, so you know your new sofa will stand the test of time.

Check out the full range at dfs.co.uk/freya



Discover more from the *House Beautiful* Collection at **dfs.co.uk/house-beautiful**

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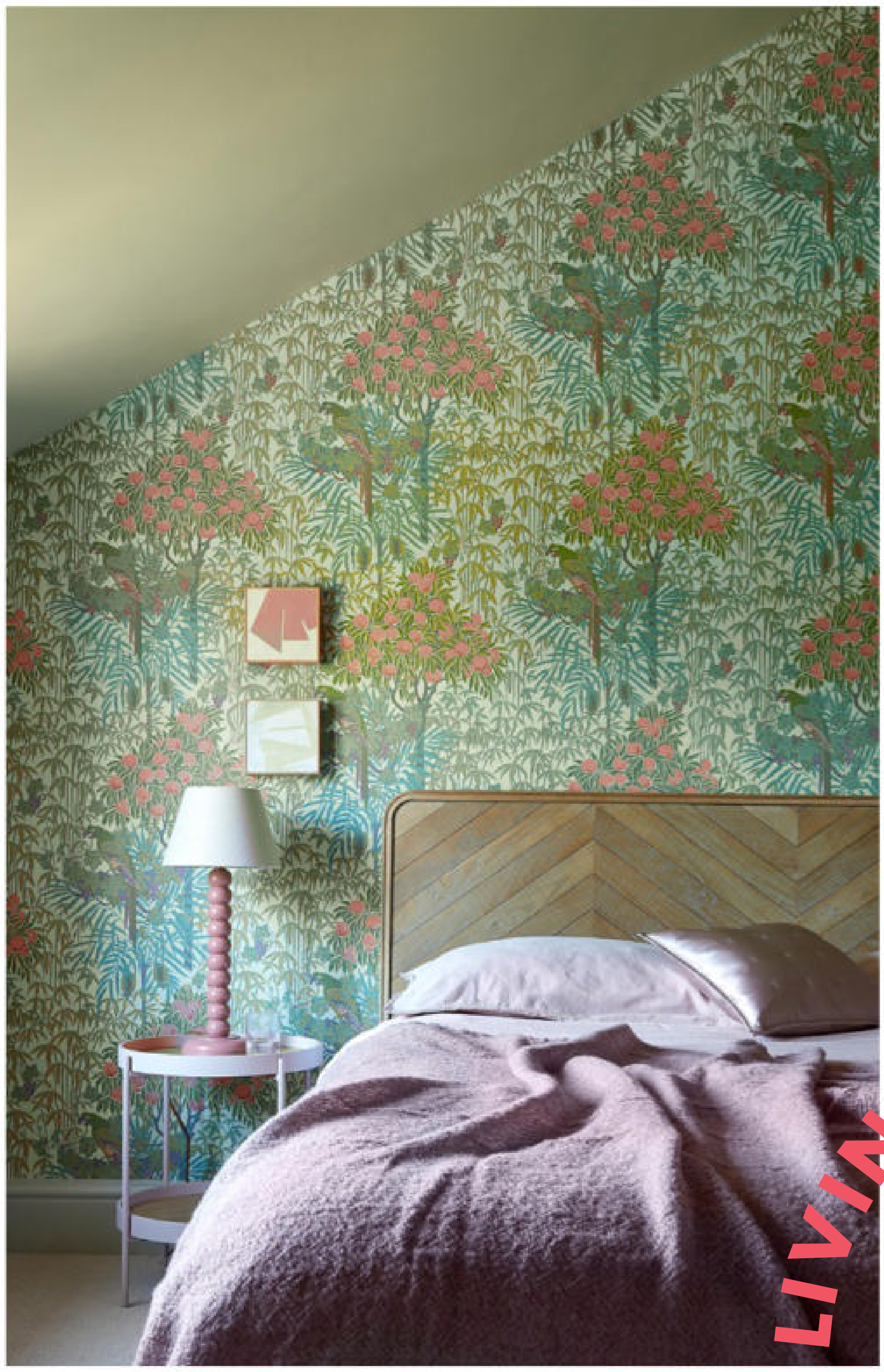
THE LIVING INFLUENCER

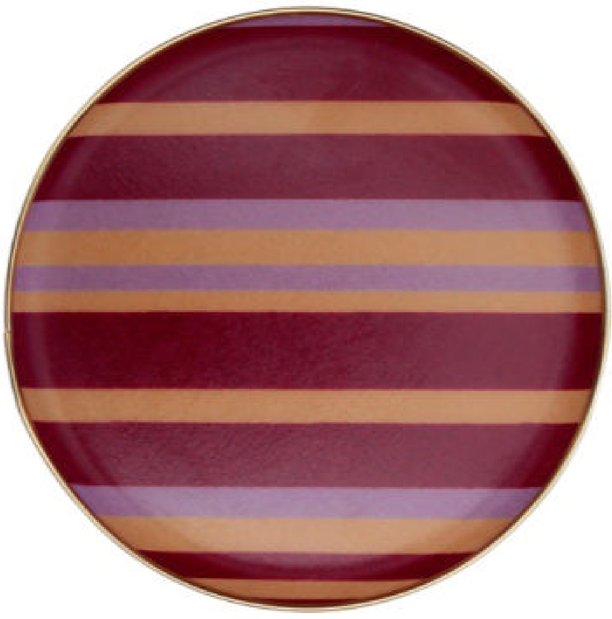
RED INTERIORS EDITOR JAMES CUNNINGHAM ON THE THINGS HE LOVES THIS MONTH



PAST AND PRESENT

The V&A has just collaborated with 1838 Wallcoverings on a collection of exuberant papers. Each design is inspired by the museum's archive but takes a thoroughly modern approach with colour.

MACAW WALLPAPER IN OLIVE, £124 a roll, V&A x 1838 Wallcoverings



BETWEEN THE LINES

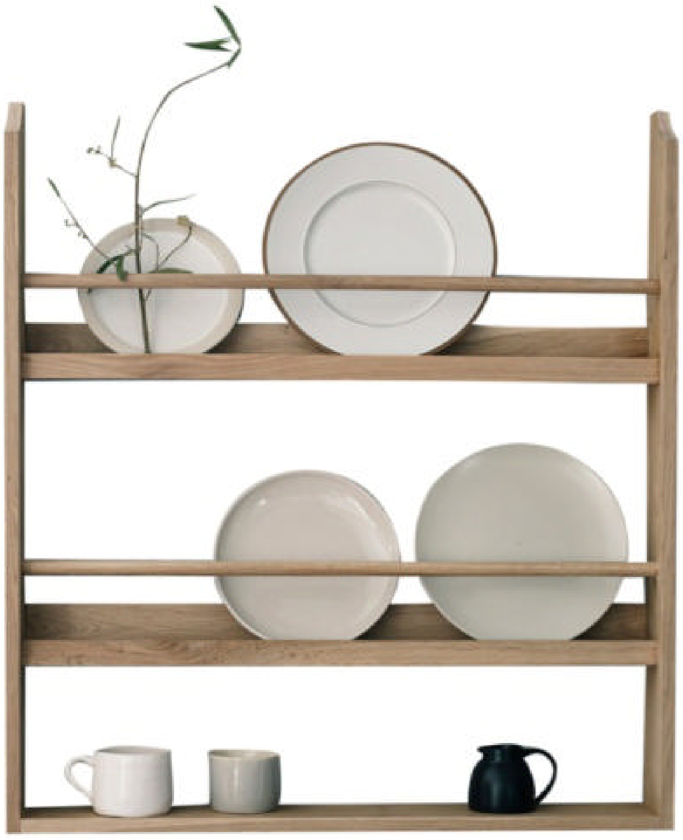
Dar Leone's colourful trays (available in a number of shapes and sizes) aren't just for serving drinks – use them on coffee tables, desks and dressing tables, too.

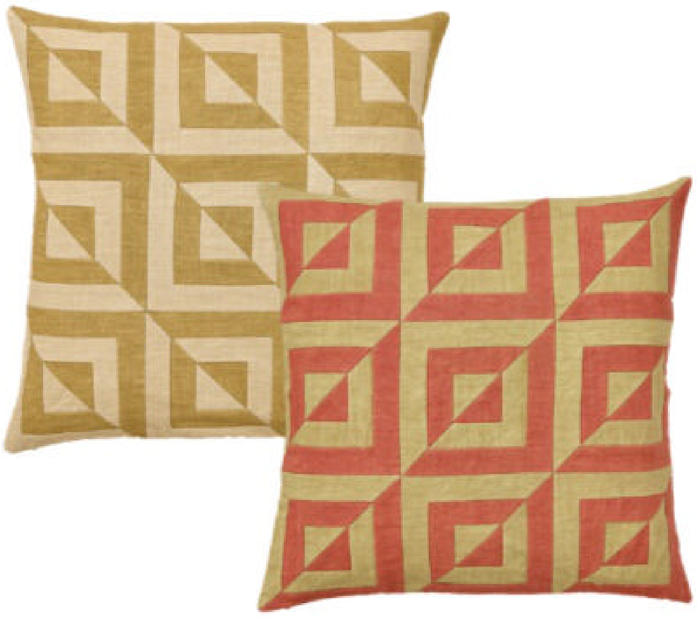
SOSA TRAY IN BARBADOS CHERRY, £32, Dar Leone

OFF THE WALL

Handcrafted using responsibly sourced oak, this pretty plate rack (complete with mug shelf) is just the thing for smaller kitchens. Use it to display your favourite pieces.

PLATE RACK, £198, Rowen & Wren





TICK BOX

These smart patchwork cushions, part of the latest collection at Toast, are a contemporary interpretation of traditional folk designs.

CUSHIONS, £72 each, Toast

BLOOMING WILD
RUTH MASTENBROEK

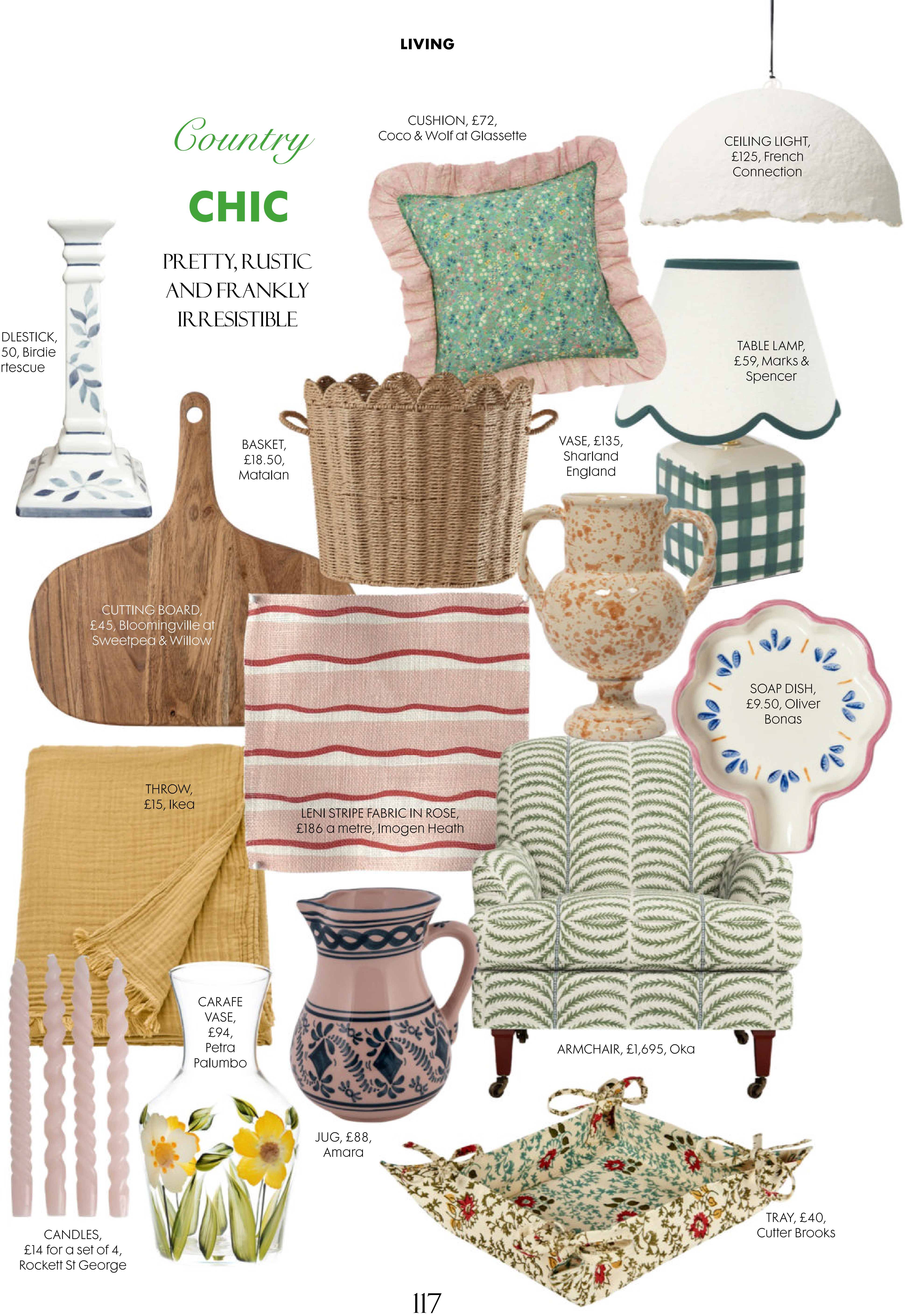
FLORAL FANCY

With spring on the horizon, I'll be bringing the outside in with Ruth Mastenbroek's sustainable home fragrances. This Blooming Wild candle includes notes of citrus, jasmine and gardenia.

CANDLE, £45, Ruth Mastenbroek

Country CHIC

PRETTY, RUSTIC AND FRANKLY IRRESISTIBLE



CUSHION, £72, Coco & Wolf at Glassette

CEILING LIGHT, £125, French Connection

CANDLESTICK, £39.50, Birdie Fortescue

TABLE LAMP, £59, Marks & Spencer

BASKET, £18.50, Matalan

VASE, £135, Sharland England

CUTTING BOARD, £45, Bloomingville at Sweetpea & Willow

SOAP DISH, £9.50, Oliver Bonas

THROW, £15, Ikea

LENI STRIPE FABRIC IN ROSE, £186 a metre, Imogen Heath

CARAFE VASE, £94, Petra Palumbo

ARMCHAIR, £1,695, Oka

JUG, £88, Amara

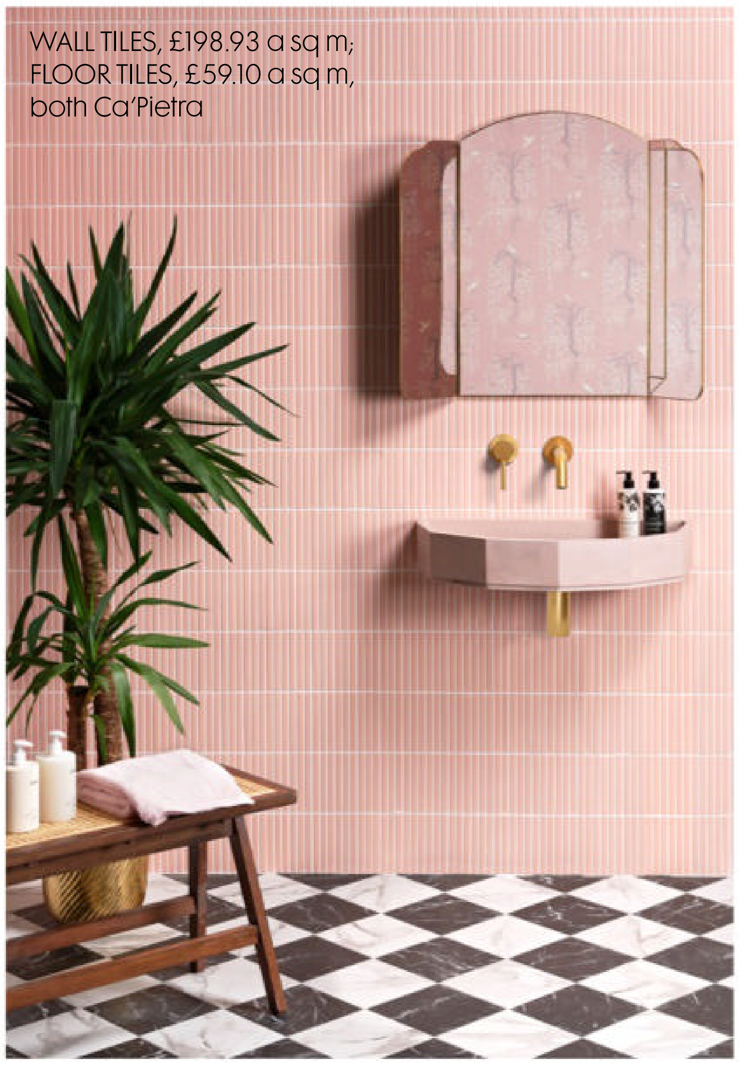
TRAY, £40, Cutter Brooks

CANDLES, £14 for a set of 4, Rockett St George

COMPILED BY: BECCA CULLUM-GREEN

Mad ABOUT THE *house*

KATE WATSON-SMYTH, INTERIORS EXPERT AND *RED* COLUMNIST, SHARES THE PLANS FOR HER RENOVATION



WALL TILES, £198.93 a sq m; FLOOR TILES, £59.10 a sq m, both Ca'Pietra

Renovating a home is like playing Jenga with bricks formatted like Tetris. Those who have done it are familiar with the builder's cry of, 'Where do you want the sockets, love?' while standing in a space with a dust floor, no walls and steel poles holding up the ceiling. How, you think furiously to yourself, can I decide where I will make my toast when I don't even have a roof?

But, if planned properly in advance, that is one of the easier questions you will have to answer.

So, where do you start when planning a renovation? The answer lies in the preparation. You may have had that sample of wallpaper pinned to your wall or Pinterest board for the past six months, but there's no point spending thousands of pounds on paint and furnishings if the windows leak and the floorboards are draughty.

Start with the architectural features and work up and in. This is why, two months after moving, I still haven't unpacked most of the boxes; I can't unpack them until the storage has been built, and I can't build the storage until the floors have been replaced, and I can't replace the floors until the pipework for the radiators has been done.

So it's plumbing and electrics first, as pipes and cables need to be laid under floors and plastered into walls. Now you see why the electrician wants to know about sockets so soon.

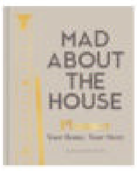
But in order to know where you will need your lights, you need to know where the furniture is going. So, the first port of call is actually the floorplan. For most of us, there aren't multiple places where the bed and sofa can go, so plot them in and remember to add sockets for lamps at either side. Visualise how you will use your kitchen, adding plugs so the kettle is near the toaster.

That said, do take the time to check the rooms are in the right place. Just because the estate agent sold it as a bedroom doesn't mean it might not make a better bathroom.

Once those decisions have been made, you can look at flooring – bearing in mind you only want to do this once as it's a massive pain to move all the furniture out to repaint boards or lay parquet.

Now you have dealt with the architectural side of things, you can start ordering samples and choosing paint colours. While you may have already been doing this for weeks, you have also subconsciously been learning how the light flows around the rooms during the day, which might influence your choice of colour – there's a reason colour comes second to last. Because while the pipework for the radiators is the first thing to happen, fixing the radiators to the wall can only be done after flooring and decoration.

Planning a renovation is like doing a jigsaw how your granny taught you. You have to fix the outside pieces first – only then can you start to fill in the middle.



Mad About The House Planner: Your Home, Your Story (Pavilion) by Kate Watson-Smyth is out now; madaboutthehouse.com

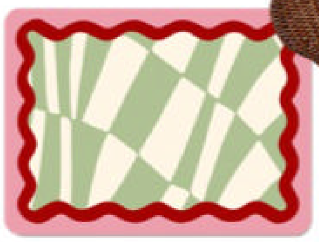
5 of the best...

Placemats

LOBSTER PLACEMAT, £35 for a set of 4, Thornback & Peel

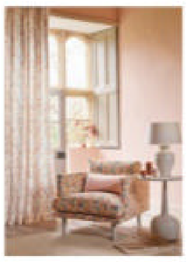
EMBROIDERED PLACEMAT, £18, Birdie Fortescue

RATTAN PLACEMAT, £22, Rebecca Udall



PLACEMAT, £102 for a set of 6, Balu London at Glassette

PLACEMATS, £22.50 for a set of 2, Oliver Bonas



DESIGN TIP

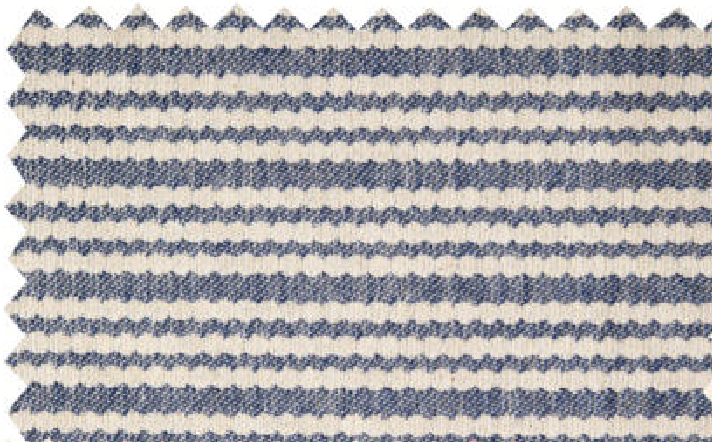
Curtains are expensive, so it's worth understanding the measurements. Floor length will always look best, and they should finish about 1cm above the floor so they don't drag when using. The poles should extend 15-25cm either side of the window to allow the curtains to pull back without blocking the light. When it comes to the fullness of the curtain, it's all about personal taste and budget. The minimum is 1½ times the width of the window – most websites will have an online calculator to help.

CURTAIN FABRIC LEILANI IN BLUSH, £58.50 a m; ARMCHAIR FABRIC ORRIN IN BLUSH, £147.50 a m; CUSHION FABRIC DUNE IN ROSE QUARTZ, £43.50 a m, all Romo

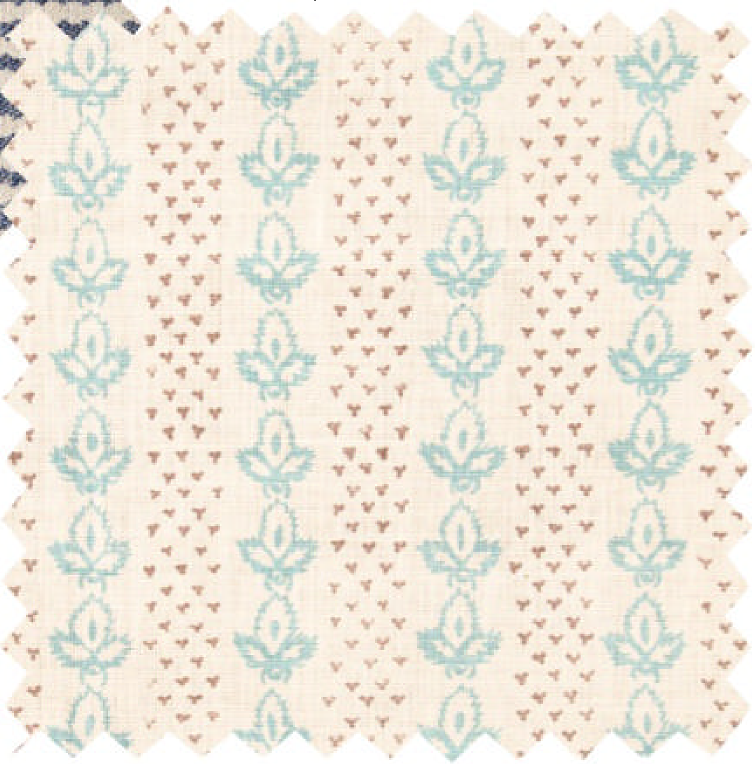
Trending TEXTILES

REFRESH YOUR SPRING ROOM SCHEMES WITH THESE FABULOUS FABRICS

FLAG IN 010, £160*, Fermoie


SCALLOP STRIPE IN NAVY, £75, Tori Murphy

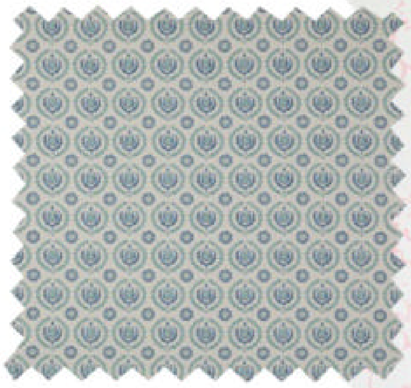
STRAWBERRY IN OYSTER/ COPPER, £181, Molly Mahon

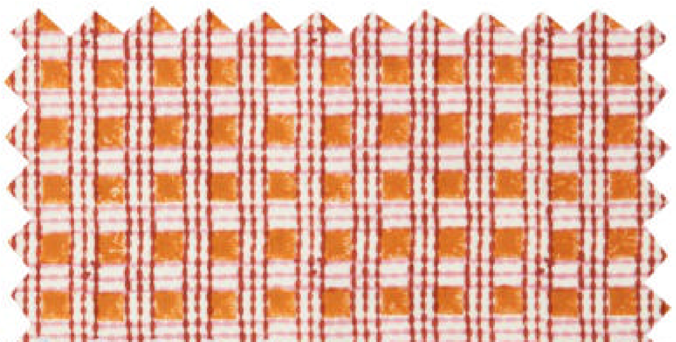

BEES AQUA, £135, Sibyl Colefax & John Fowler

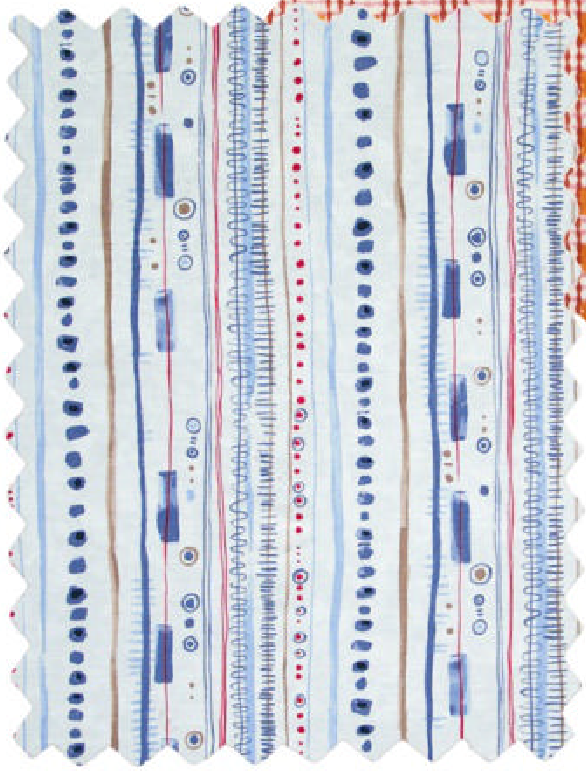
HARBOUR STRIPE IN ROSE, £75, Tori Murphy

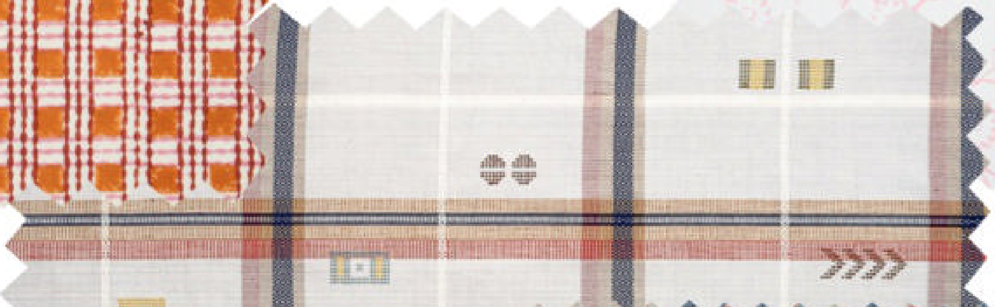
RIBBON IN FIESTA, £250, A Rum Fellow

NAKED ANGELICA IN PINK, £110, Mimi Pickard


KIRA IN BLUE/AQUA, £80, Jane Churchill


TRELLIS IN OYSTER/ COPPER/ RUST, £177, Molly Mahon


PIANO IN OLD VIOLET, £44.95, Annie Sloan


FABLE IN FJORD, £250, A Rum Fellow

SAVERNAKE IN 006, £160, Fermoie

COMPILED BY: MADDY ANDO. *ALL PRICES ARE FOR A METRE

Photography *James Merrell and Robin Kitchin*
Words *Carolyn Bailey*

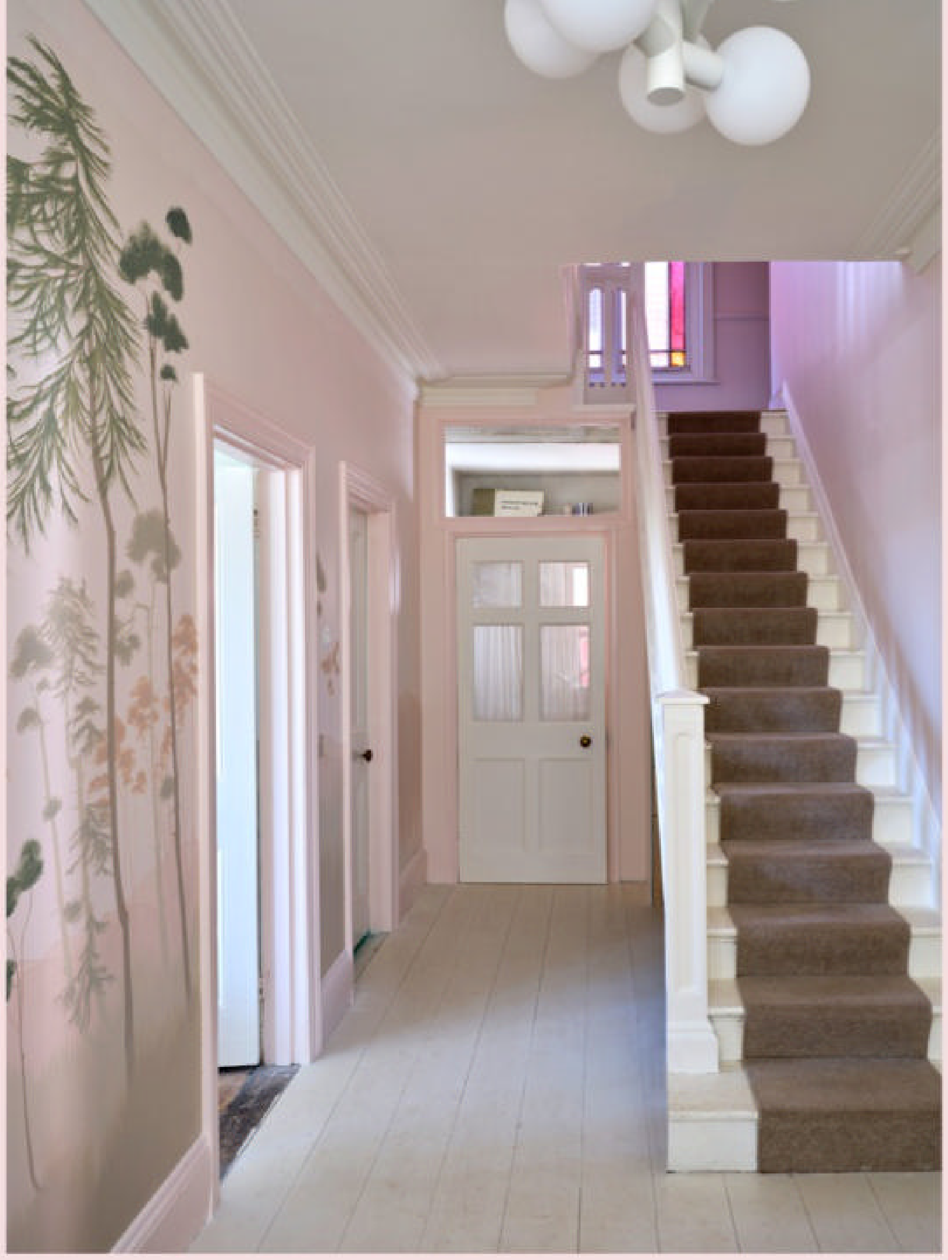
The POWER *of* PAINT

FARROW & BALL'S CREATIVE DIRECTOR TRANSFORMED TWO APARTMENTS TO CREATE A COLOURFUL FAMILY HOME

HOME CV

WHO Charlotte Cosby, creative director at Farrow & Ball, and Lawrence Showell, outdoor holidays developer for The National Trust, with their two children, Bea and Raffi.

WHAT A detached four-bedroom early-Edwardian house in Southbourne, Dorset – just a five-minute walk from the beach. Charlotte bought the top-floor flat in 2010, and when the ground-floor flat came up for sale in 2020, the couple bought it and turned the property back into a house as well as adding an extension.

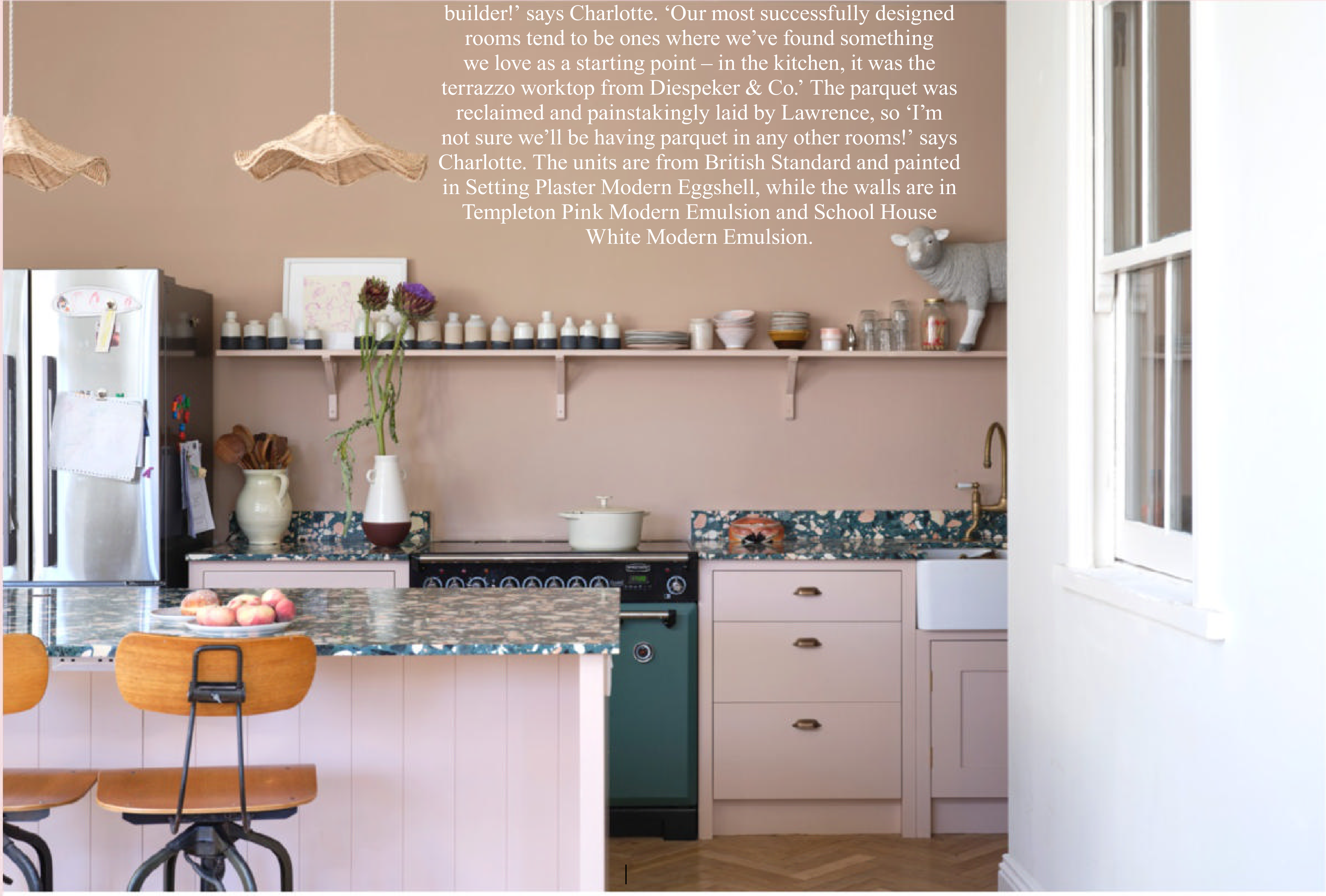


HALLWAY

The mural in the hall was inspired by the nearby coastline, which is lined with pine trees. ‘I love the feeling of early summer mornings when the light is “just so”, and I really wanted our hallway to feel open and have a sense of wonder,’ says Charlotte. ‘We took hundreds of pictures of our favourite trees and gave them to artist Michael Angove, who turned them into a mural for us. He’s hidden little things here and there, including the children and our house.’ The mural is still not finished, but Michael has now gone all the way up the stairs and eventually will do the landing as well. ‘I love how personal Michael made the mural and how it makes me smile when I come downstairs,’ Charlotte says. The walls are painted in Farrow & Ball’s Tailor Tack Estate Emulsion, the ceiling in Wimborne White Estate Emulsion and the glazed internal door is vintage.

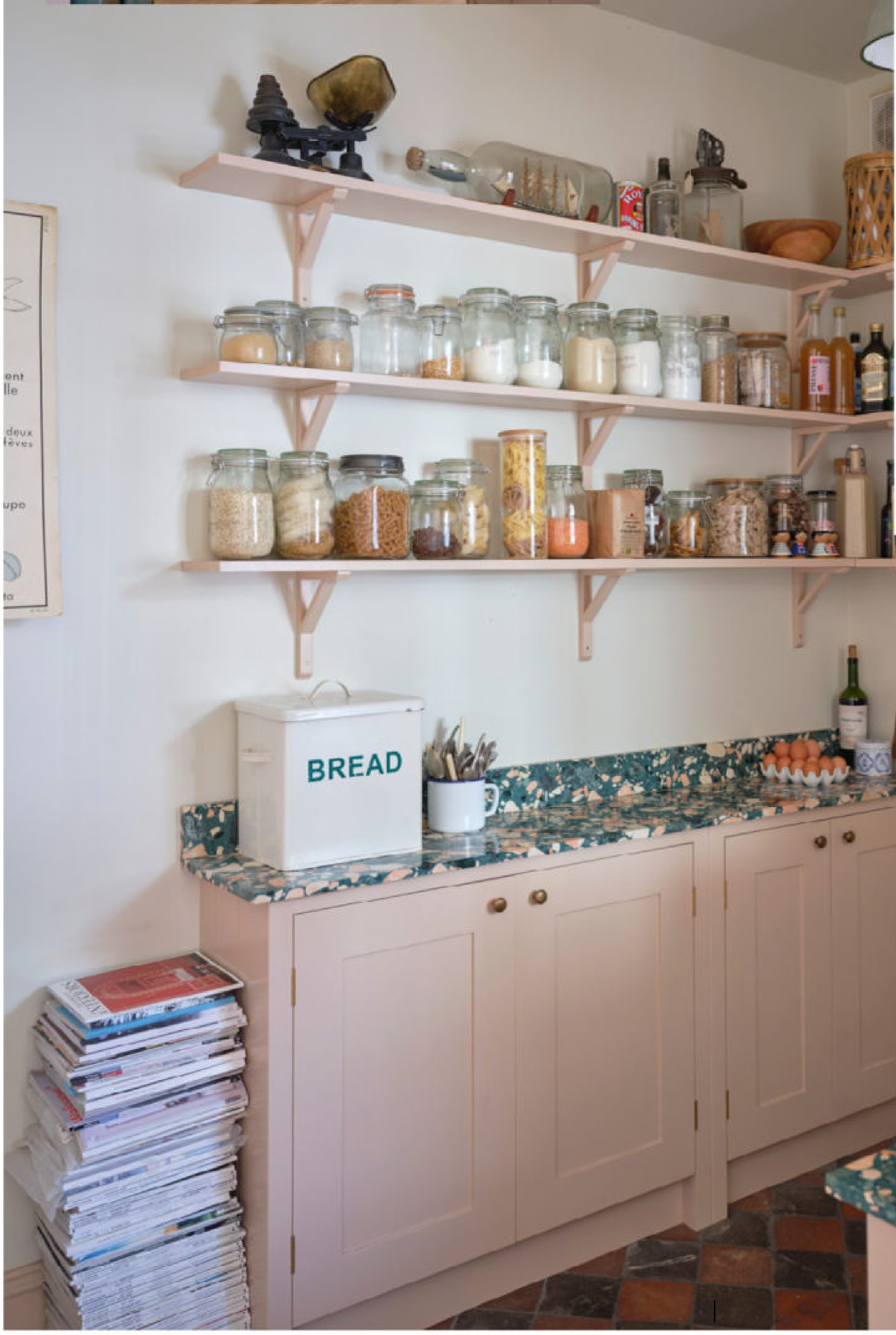
KITCHEN

The kitchen is part of the extension that was built when the property was restored into a house. ‘We made a scale model of it from a cereal packet and gave it to our builder!’ says Charlotte. ‘Our most successfully designed rooms tend to be ones where we’ve found something we love as a starting point – in the kitchen, it was the terrazzo worktop from Diespeker & Co.’ The parquet was reclaimed and painstakingly laid by Lawrence, so ‘I’m not sure we’ll be having parquet in any other rooms!’ says Charlotte. The units are from British Standard and painted in Setting Plaster Modern Eggshell, while the walls are in Templeton Pink Modern Emulsion and School House White Modern Emulsion.



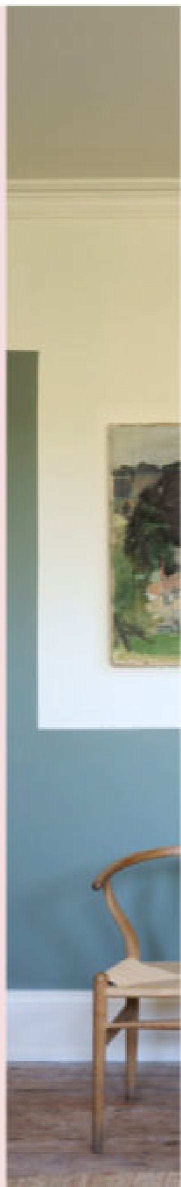
KITCHEN

This part of the kitchen is obscured by the pantry wall and was designed to hide the sink and dishwasher when the family are sitting at the dining table. As a point of interest, they added an internal window that doubles as a serving hatch.



PANTRY

'We really wanted to be able to access things easily in the pantry, so we designed the room with shelves so we could actually see what we have and get to it,' Charlotte explains. 'I love that every time I'm in there, I find some crazy world the kids and their vivid imaginations have created; Raffi's flower shop with the leftover flowers from a photoshoot was a personal favourite!' The pantry floor was from the original kitchen – the previous owners found it under vinyl when they bought the house and managed to reuse it. The units, painted in Setting Plaster Modern Eggshell, are from British Standard.



COSY SPOT

This room was designed so the family could have a comfy nook to curl up in and take advantage of the evening light as the sun sets. 'We wanted it to feel relaxed and informal so we can watch the children play in the garden and because we often entertain guests,' says Charlotte. The secondhand sofa has been reupholstered in Liberty's Emberton linen.

LIVING ROOM

Preferring to buy secondhand pieces, Charlotte says the Ikea rug is the only piece in the living room that's new. 'We've also played with paint in this space, adding interest to the door and giving the fireplace a temporary mantel until we find one we like,' she adds. The walls and ceiling are painted in School House White and Card Room Green Estate Emulsion. Most of the furniture and accessories are from vintage shops or eBay, while the ceramics on the tables are from Margot Wilson.

MAIN BEDROOM

The inspiration for this room started with the Linwood Wave fabric headboard, which Charlotte made the day before the shoot. 'As with most of our rooms, this space has evolved over a series of discussions and from things we've both collected on trips; it's important our personalities come through in each space,' she says. The walls are painted in Light Blue Estate Emulsion and the floor and architrave in Setting Plaster Modern Eggshell. The bedside table is painted in Skimming Stone Estate Eggshell and the bed linen is from Piglet in Bed. The Alumina lamp is from Tala.

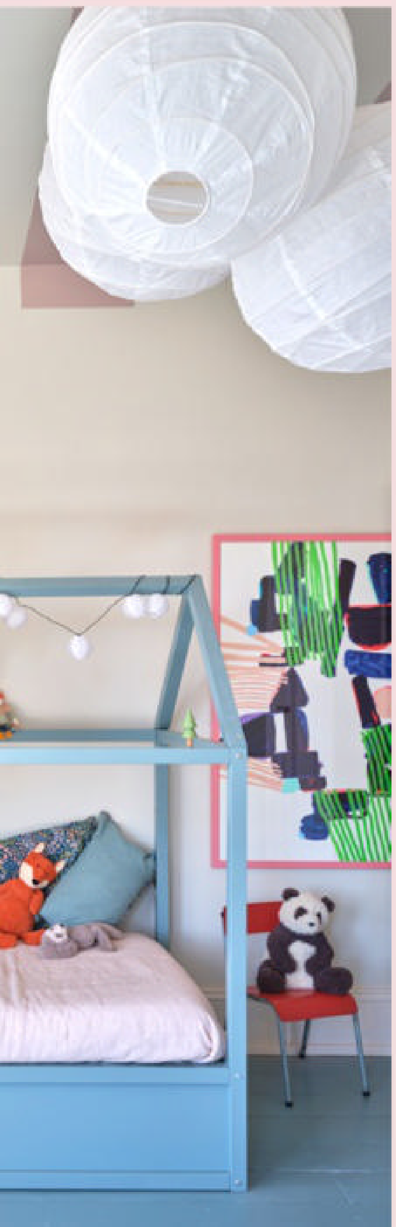
RAFFI'S BEDROOM

When she first moved into the first-floor flat, Charlotte's dad helped her stick up the planks of wood in this space. The print is from a wallpaper dealer in New York. The walls are painted in Kittiwake Modern Emulsion and the seagrass stool is from a kit, made by Lawrence and Charlotte while Charlotte was in labour with Bea.

BATHROOM

'I saw the original John James Audubon flamingo at the Natural History Museum and fell in love with it,' says Charlotte. 'It became the obvious choice for the bathroom when I found out Surface View could print directly on to tiles. I've had it for 10 years now, but it's still such a talking point in the space.' The floor tiles are from Rebecca Hayes Interiors, the panelling is painted in Dix Blue Modern Eggshell and the walls are in Pavilion Blue Modern Emulsion.

GET THE LOOK COMPILED BY: CARA LASKARIS



BEA'S BEDROOM

Charlotte and Lawrence painted stripes on the ceiling in Pink Drab Estate Emulsion and School House White Modern Emulsion as Bea was desperate to have pink in her room. 'It makes it feel cosier and gives it a bit of spirit – much like its inhabitant!' says Charlotte. 'I love a coloured floor, and, as kids' bedrooms can get very hectic, a painted floor in Oval Room Blue with neutral School House White walls helps balance that a little.' The canopy is made up in Liberty fabric while the artwork is by Michael Angove. The bed is from Ikea and the bedding is Zara Home and H&M Home. In keeping with the rest of the house, the chair is vintage.

GET THE LOOK

ADD A LICK OF MODERN TO THE VINTAGE

CUSHION, £75, Alice Palmer & Co

PENDANT SHADE, £195, Edit58 x Matilda Goad

BELTON SCENIC WALLPAPER, £244 a panel, Little Greene

FRAMED PRINT, £198, Mindthegap

CARD ROOM GREEN NO. 79 ESTATE EMULSION, £54.50 for 2.5L, FARROW & BALL

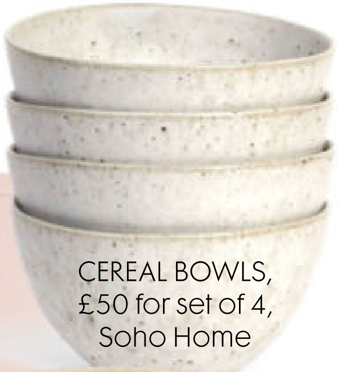
BENCH, £275, Cox & Cox

VASE, £35, Bloomingville at Sweetpea & Willow

SALT POT AND SPOON, £24, Bloomingville at Beaumonde

JAR, £33, Rockett St George

SETTING PLASTER NO. 231 ESTATE EMULSION, £54.50 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball



CEREAL BOWLS, £50 for set of 4, Soho Home

LOCKER, £289, Mustard Made

DUVET COVER, from £75 for a single, Camomile London

CHAIR, £540 for set of 2, Loaf

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IN BLACK

WHITSTABLE IN BLUSH PINK

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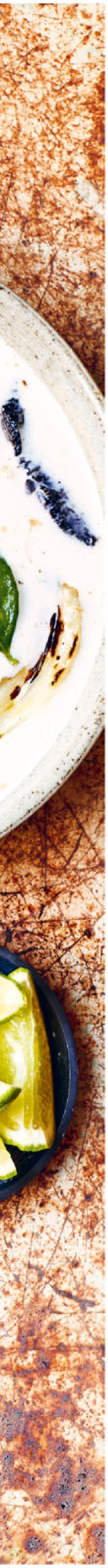


BOWLED *over*

BRING A COSY MOOD TO THE TABLE (OR SOFA) WITH DELICIOUS BOWL FOOD FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA

Recipes. *Norman Musa*

Thom kha soup with charred vegetables

For this recipe, I prefer to use my own stock infused with Asian herbs instead of shop-bought stock cubes that mainly consist of Western herbs. This coconut-based soup is served as a starter in many Thai restaurants, but in Thailand itself it is served as a side dish, together with other main dishes. Galangal is the main ingredient, which gives the citrussy flavour, but if sourcing it is difficult where you live, adding ginger with a little lemon juice does the trick. I recommend serving this dish with vermicelli noodles, if you would like an accompaniment.

SERVES 4

- **200ml coconut milk**
- **½tbsp palm sugar**
- **1 lime, halved; ½ for the juice, the other ½ cut into 4 wedges**
- **1½tbsp vegetable oil**
- **2 fennel bulbs, quartered and cut into 1cm slices**
- **3 portobello mushrooms, about 225g, cut into 1cm slices**
- **3 medium tomatoes, each cut into 6 wedges**
- **Cooked vermicelli noodles, to serve, optional**

FOR THE STOCK

- **1 lemongrass stalk, white part only, bruised and thinly sliced**
- **1 medium white onion, thinly sliced**
- **3 garlic cloves, sliced**
- **2.5cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and julienned**
- **5cm piece fresh galangal, peeled and julienned**

FOR THE GARNISH

- **Bunch fresh coriander, leaves picked**
- **4 kaffir lime leaves, ribs removed, thinly sliced**

1 In a large pan, combine all the stock ingredients with 800ml water. Bring to the boil, then reduce heat to low and simmer, uncovered, for 8min. Using a slotted spoon, transfer the stock flavouring ingredients to a small bowl for use later.

2 Next, stir the coconut milk, sugar, 1tsp salt and the lime juice into the stock. Stir well and turn off the heat. Heat ½tbsp oil in a frying pan over medium-high heat, fry the reserved stock flavouring ingredients for 3min, and then tip into the soup.

3 Using the same pan, over medium-high heat, add the remaining oil, then cook the fennel in batches for 2min on each side until nicely charred. Transfer to serving bowls. Repeat for the mushrooms, but cook for just 1min on each side, and then the tomatoes for 2min on each side.

4 Pour the soup into the bowls, garnish with the coriander, kaffir lime leaves and lime wedges, and serve with the vermicelli noodles, if using.

Prawn noodle soup

Cooking prawns with the heads and shells on adds to the flavour of a dish. This type of noodle soup is famous in Southeast Asia. It is served in a large ceramic bowl and is eaten with chopsticks and a spoon, with chilli oil on the side. It is my favourite dish to cook when it is cold outside and I am craving a hot bowl of soup to help me warm up. I always have a batch of large frozen prawns in my freezer so that I have something easy to cook, and for this simple noodle dish I use ready-made chicken stock. Alternatively, you can use shelled and deveined prawns and add some shop-bought fish balls.

SERVES 2

- **100g fine egg noodles**
- **4 large raw king prawns, heads and shells on**
- **½ tbsp vegetable oil**
- **5cm piece cinnamon stick**
- **1 star anise**
- **1 medium onion, halved and sliced**
- **3 garlic cloves, sliced**
- **700ml chicken stock**
- **100g bean sprouts**
- **50g baby spinach**

FOR THE SEASONING

- **½ tbsp chilli paste (I recommend sambal badjak)**
- **1 tbsp light soy sauce**
- **1 tbsp fish sauce**
- **1 tsp palm sugar**
- **½ tsp ground white pepper**

FOR THE GARNISH

- **1 spring onion, cut into thin strips and soaked in cold water until curled, then drained**
- **½ red chilli, thinly sliced diagonally**
- **1 tbsp chilli oil, optional**

1 Cook the egg noodles in a pan of boiling water according to the pack instructions. Drain and divide between serving bowls.

2 Place the prawns on a chopping board and, using a small, sharp knife, cut along the back of each prawn to remove the vein; this will also help the flesh of the prawn to absorb the flavours of the seasoning. Trim the legs and keep the whiskers for presentation.

3 Heat the oil in a medium pan over medium-high heat, fry the cinnamon and star anise for 30sec, then stir in the onion and garlic and cook for 1min.

4 Add the seasoning ingredients, stir well and then add the prawns. Cook for 1min, then stir in the stock. Bring to the boil and once the prawns have turned pink and curled up nicely, remove them with a slotted spoon and transfer to the bowls with the noodles.

5 Continue to boil the broth over low heat for 2min, then turn off the heat. Pour the broth into the bowls, add the bean sprouts and spinach, then garnish with the spring onion, chilli and chilli oil, if using. Serve at once.

Steamed sea bass with Asian dressing

The sauce in this dish is one of my most used dressings and can also be used to dress a salad. The fragrant herbs help to lift the flavour of any dish, but it should always be prepared just before it is needed. You can cook this dish using a whole sea bass as they do in the Far East, but allow an additional 10min for steaming.

SERVES 2

- **300g pak choi, cut into strips 3cm wide**
- **8 cherry tomatoes**
- **2 sea bass fillets (skin on), about 150g per fillet**
- **½ tsp ground white pepper**
- **2 spring onions, cut into thin strips and soaked in cold water until curled, then drained**
- **½ red chilli, deseeded, julienned and soaked in cold water for 10min**
- **Jasmine rice, to serve**

FOR THE DRESSING

- **3 garlic cloves, crushed**
- **1tsp grated root ginger**
- **1 lemongrass stalk, thinly sliced**
- **½ red chilli, deseeded and finely chopped**
- **1tbsp chopped fresh coriander, plus extra to garnish**
- **1tbsp fish sauce**
- **2tbsp light soy sauce**
- **½ tsp palm sugar**
- **Juice ½ lime**

1 Set a steamer ready. Mix all the dressing ingredients together in a small bowl and set aside.

2 Place a heatproof bowl in the steamer, put the pak choi and cherry tomatoes into the bowl, cover and steam for 5min.

3 Season sea bass with ½tsp salt and the white pepper. Put the fish on a board and roll up fillets from the tail end with the skin on the inside, exposing the flesh on the outside. Put the sea bass on the pak choi in steamer, cover and steam for 10min.

4 Lift the lid and pour the dressing over the sea bass; replace the lid and steam for a further 5min.

5 Turn off the heat, carefully remove the bowl from the steamer and garnish with the spring onions, chilli and extra coriander. Serve with jasmine rice.

King mushroom clay pot rice

The beauty of cooking rice in a clay pot is that the pot retains the heat and maintains a steady temperature, allowing the rice to cook perfectly, in the same way as in a heavy-based pan. Clay pots are relatively inexpensive and can be bought in most Chinese supermarkets or online, but you don't have to have a clay pot to cook this, and here I just used a normal pan. I made the king oyster mushrooms look like scallops; they have a soft texture that goes well with the clay pot rice.

SERVES 4

- **4 king oyster mushrooms, about 100g each, cut into 3cm 'scallop-sized' pieces**
- **1 medium onion, thinly sliced**
- **8 dried shiitake mushrooms, soaked in boiling water for 15min or until soft, then drained**
- **2tsp sesame oil**
- **400g long grain rice, rinsed**
- **2 pak choi, quartered**
- **1 spring onion, cut into thin strips and soaked in cold water until curled, then drained**

FOR THE SEASONING

- **2tbsp light soy sauce**
- **1tbsp mushroom stir-fry sauce, see Norman's Tip**
- **3 garlic cloves, finely chopped**
- **2.5cm piece fresh root ginger, peeled and finely chopped**

1 Heat a large, non-stick frying pan over low-medium heat and cook the king oyster mushrooms in batches for 2min on each side. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

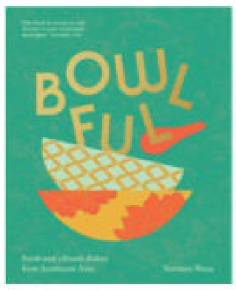
2 Put the sliced onion, shiitake mushrooms and sesame oil in a large, deep pan with 700ml water, bring to the boil, then stir in the rice and reduce the heat to low-medium. Cover the pan with a lid, leaving it slightly open, and continue to cook for 5min.

3 Next, add the pak choi and the seasoning ingredients, stir well and continue to cook for 3min over low heat.

4 Open the lid, add the king oyster mushrooms, cover the pan with foil to trap the steam, continue to cook over low heat for 2min, and then turn off the heat. Allow to rest for 5min, then divide between serving bowls and garnish with the spring onion. Serve at once.

Norman's Tip

Shop-bought mushroom stir-fry sauce is my alternative flavouring to oyster sauce that I use in vegan dishes. The shiitake mushrooms used to make the sauce add rich umami and earthy flavours.



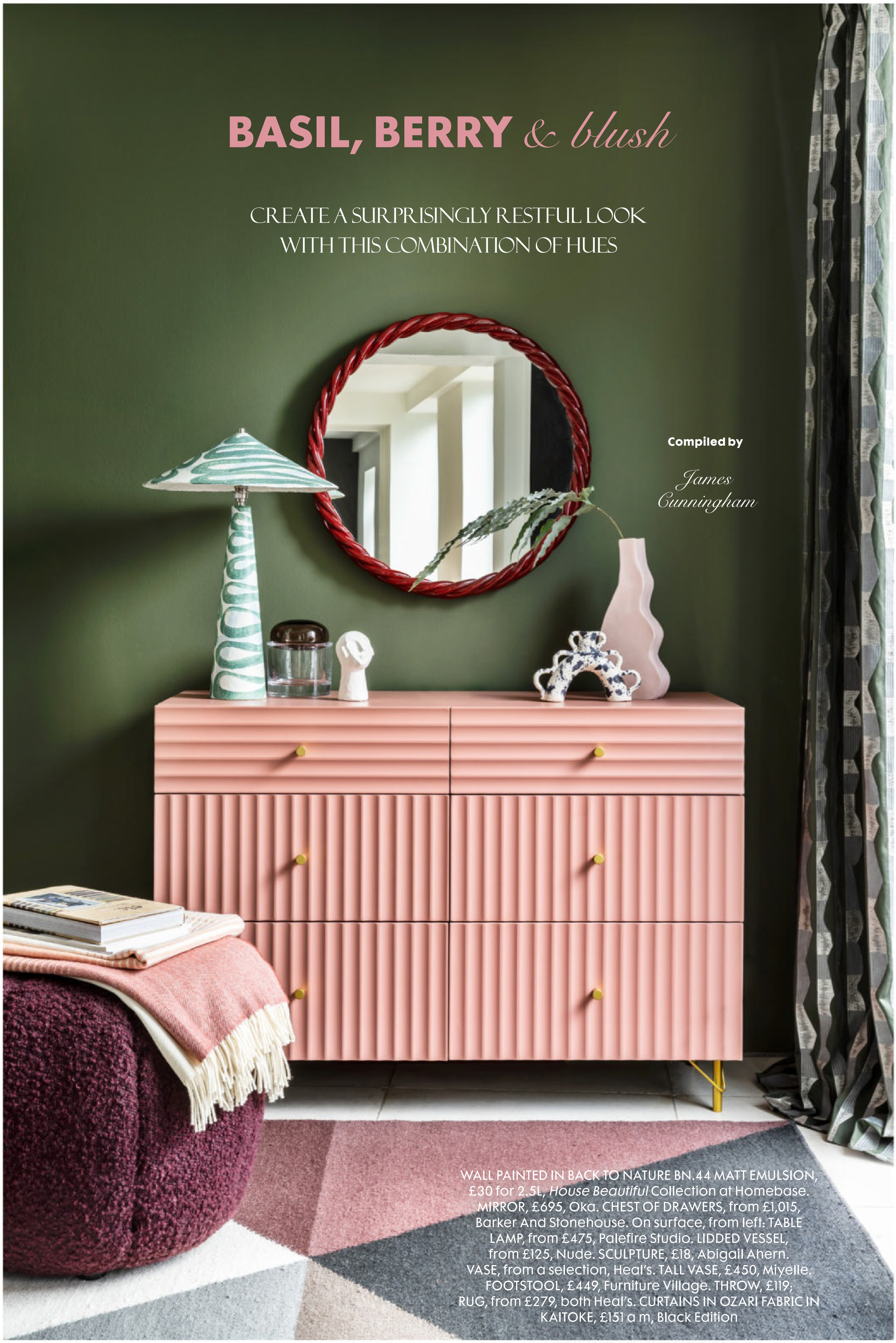
Recipes extracted from Bowlful: Fresh And Vibrant Dishes From Southeast Asia (Pavilion Books) by Norman Musa. Photography: Luke J Albert

BASIL, BERRY *& blush*

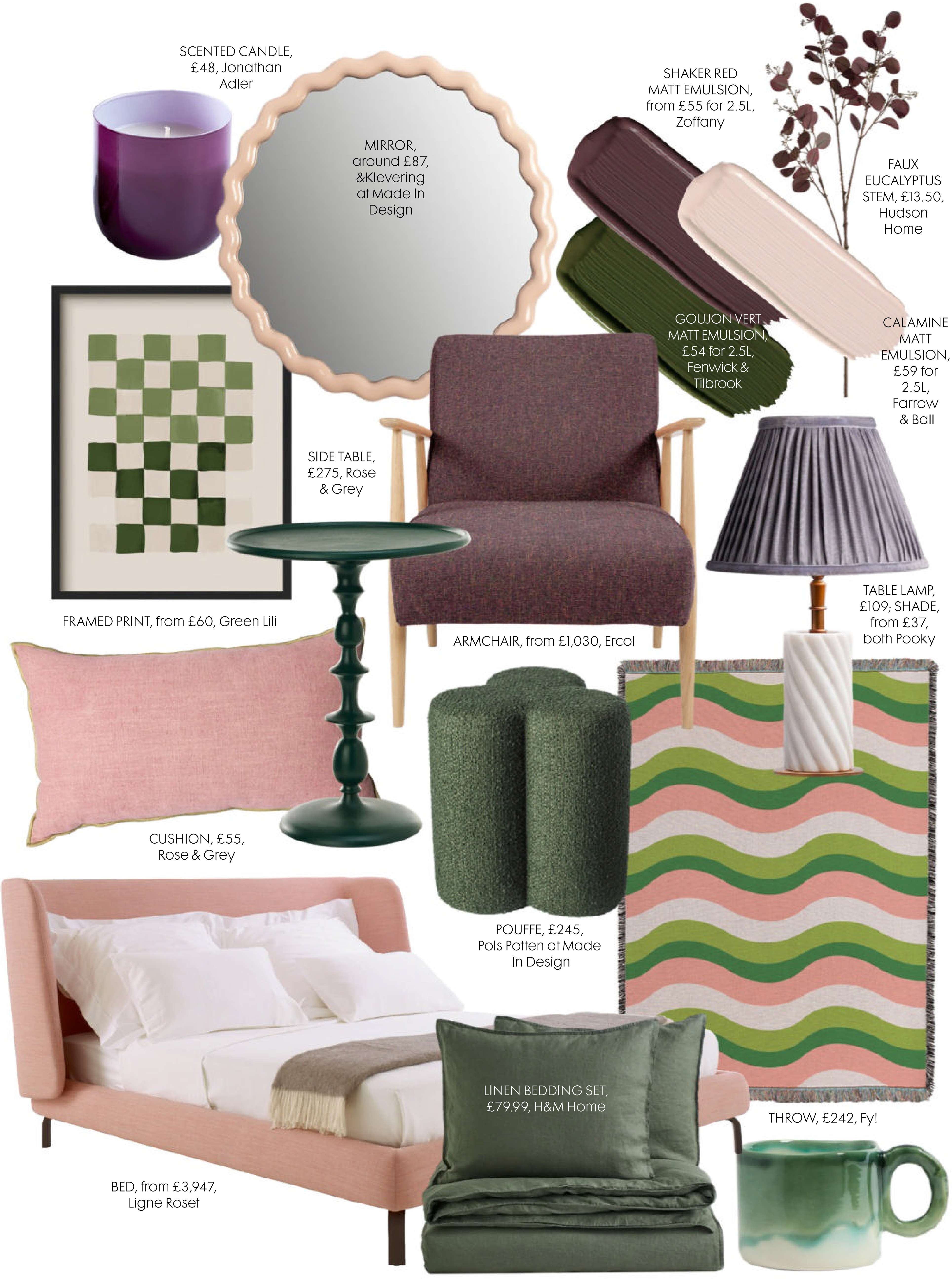
CREATE A SURPRISINGLY RESTFUL LOOK WITH THIS COMBINATION OF HUES

Compiled by

James Cunningham



WALL PAINTED IN BACK TO NATURE BN.44 MATT EMULSION, £30 for 2.5L, *House Beautiful* Collection at Homebase. MIRROR, £695, Oka. CHEST OF DRAWERS, from £1,015, Barker And Stonehouse. On surface, from left: TABLE LAMP, from £475, Palefire Studio. LIDDED VESSEL, from £125, Nude. SCULPTURE, £18, Abigail Ahern. VASE, from a selection, Heal's. TALL VASE, £450, Miyelle. FOOTSTOOL, £449, Furniture Village. THROW, £119; RUG, from £279, both Heal's. CURTAINS IN OZARI FABRIC IN KAITOKE, £151 a m, Black Edition



SCENTED CANDLE, £48, Jonathan Adler

MIRROR, around £87, &Klevering at Made In Design

SHAKER RED MATT EMULSION, from £55 for 2.5L, Zoffany

FAUX EUCALYPTUS STEM, £13.50, Hudson Home

GOUJON VERT MATT EMULSION, £54 for 2.5L, Fenwick & Tilbrook

CALAMINE MATT EMULSION, £59 for 2.5L, Farrow & Ball

SIDE TABLE, £275, Rose & Grey

FRAMED PRINT, from £60, Green Lili

ARMCHAIR, from £1,030, Ercol

TABLE LAMP, £109; SHADE, from £37, both Pooky

CUSHION, £55, Rose & Grey

POUFFE, £245, Pols Potten at Made In Design

LINEN BEDDING SET, £79.99, H&M Home

THROW, £242, Fy!

BED, from £3,947, Ligne Roset

HANDCRAFTED MUG, £36, Pottery & Poetry at Liberty

PHOTOGRAPHY: OLI DOUGLAS. STYLING: REBECCA DE BOEHMLER. CREATIVE DIRECTION: SARAH KEADY

Home is where the HEART IS

INTERIORS INFLUENCER DONNA WARDELL REVEALS THE DESIGN INSPIRATION BEHIND HER CAREFULLY CURATED KENT SPACE

MYA SOFA, DFS

For digital creator and house renovator Donna Wardell, home is where she can relax, indulge in her love of Victorian décor and curl up with a cocktail after a long day at work. Here, she shares how her interior-design journey has been a labour of love.

The call of Victoriana

'We moved to Kent from London in 2017 and we haven't looked back,' says Donna of the switch to the semi-detached house in Bromley that she shares with husband Tom and sausage dog Peggy. 'I've always loved 19th-century styling,' she explains, adding that even when renting, she was drawn to period buildings ('I'd really struggle to live in a house that wasn't Victorian or Georgian, it's just not my style'). Describing her aesthetic as 'Victorian with a modern twist', she reveals that the main appeal of the house was the potential to restore it to its former glory. 'It already had a lot of character when we bought it,' she says, citing the stained-glass front door as an example, along with the period fireplaces found in almost every room, which the couple have restored. They've also carefully reinstated many original features, such as the tiled pathway leading up to the house, and the wood-panelled walls in the lounge.

Calm corner

The living room is the hub of the home, where Donna and Tom have created a serene space for relaxing and entertaining. 'We wanted a calming, neutral area where we could have people over or just enjoy a glass of wine on a Friday night,' Donna says, explaining that she chose neutral colour drenching (where one hue is used on all the surfaces) to create a more formal feel and give the room a point of difference to the rest of the house. 'It's made the room seem larger and grander,' she says, noting that their

WORDS: SARAH ILSTON. PHOTOGRAPHY: VICTORIA ADAMSON

Chesterfield-style sofa, the DFS velvet Mya in Natural Earth, works ideally within the space. ‘It’s the perfect blend of traditional and contemporary, while still being really comfortable,’ she says, ‘and velvet is one of those lovely materials that looks great in any colour or style – in fact, whenever guests come over, the sofa is always the first thing they compliment.’

Fifty shades of green

Aside from this neutral zone, the main colours of the house stick to a more traditional Victorian palette of rich, deep shades. Donna’s go-to is green and there are hints of it running through almost every room. ‘It makes everything feel tied together,’ she says, explaining that because the house is quite free-flow (‘We leave the doors open so that the rooms can act as passageways to other areas of the house’), it needs to have a sense of continuity. ‘It would look odd if there was a different colour scheme for each space,’ she says.

She is also a big fan of red, adding pops to various spots around the house, including the recently renovated kitchen (‘We’ve got an island now, so we love staying in and cooking around that’), the utility room and the downstairs bathroom.

‘I love an injection of colour,’ Donna adds, explaining that she tries to stick to a palette of no more than six colours after things went wrong in the guest room: ‘We painted it dark blue and I absolutely hated it,’ she laughs, ‘I was trying something different, but it just wasn’t me.’

> ‘I FOUND SOME NICE ARTWORK AND BUILT THE ENTIRE SCHEME OF THE LOUNGE AROUND IT’

The good life I know I've made it with you
Cuddles in the Kitchen

Donna has a good eye for unique accessories

Finer details

This test-and-learn approach is something Donna has adhered to throughout the renovation process, often trusting her gut instinct to curate a whole room around one hero piece. ‘I found some nice artwork and built the entire scheme of the lounge around it,’ she recalls. The same goes for the dining room – where she became obsessed with some textured wallpaper she’d seen on TV – and the kitchen, which features a wall of art depicting her relationship journey with Tom – from their first date to their wedding. (Fun fact: he proposed on the doorstep the day they exchanged on the house.) It’s this dedication to detail that creates such a feeling of uniqueness in Donna’s home – and the reason she’s so houseproud.

DONNA’S TIPS

Trust your gut

‘It’s your home that you’re building, so, while it’s helpful to be inspired by others, always go with your own instincts and try not to be too led by trends.’

Try new things

‘It’s good to explore, test and learn – you’ll find your own voice that way. Remember, if you don’t like it, you can change it – but you’ll never know unless you try.’

Give it time

‘Allow your style to evolve and see where it takes you. My taste was quite different five years ago, when we first moved in.’

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Angela console table

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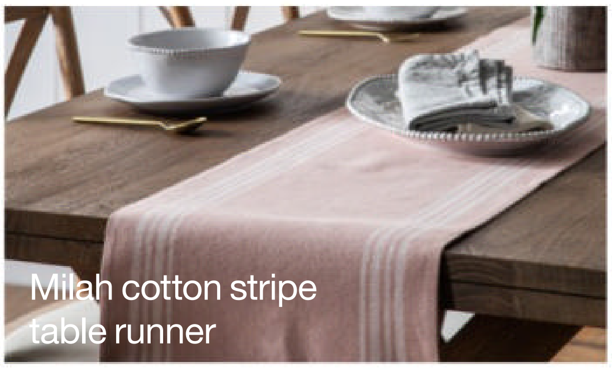

Milah cotton stripe table runner

LOVE WHERE YOU LIVE THIS YEAR

In 2023, it's all about creating your dream space. Whether your home is a peaceful sanctuary for some quiet me-time or *the* destination for friends and family, the *House Beautiful* Marketplace is here to help. From the contemporary styling of the Angela console table to everything you need for a smart dinner party, such as the Stephanie dining table, the Milah table runner and Anisa tableware (all pictured above), it couldn't be easier to give your home a modern makeover this year. And remember, you get free shipping on any orders over £30!

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All over THE GLOBE

The liver is one of the hardest-working organs in the body; it's responsible for processing, altering, detoxifying and then disposing of toxic substances (such as alcohol and medications), as well as breaking food down and converting it into energy. Give this multitasking wonder a helping hand by stocking up on artichokes (or taking a supplement): they're packed with antioxidants and have been found to improve liver function, as well as reducing cholesterol and triglyceride (blood fat) levels.

WORDS: ARIELLE STEELE. PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY

Deeper knowledge

WHAT WOULD YOU EXPECT FROM A WELLNESS RETREAT GEARED TOWARDS 'PUSSY CONSCIOUSNESS'? CHLOE GRAY VISITED SEX EDUCATOR LACEY HAYNES' SIGNATURE WEEKEND COURSE, AND DISCOVERED MUCH MORE THAN SHE BARGAINED FOR

Chloe wasn't sure what to expect when she signed up for the Golden Gift of the Goddess retreat

As the other women sway and fling their bodies around the room, I lie on the hardwood floor of the country barn with tears streaming down my face. Perhaps it was the tarot card I picked earlier that day that told me to reflect on my past, or maybe it was the thumping techno music that reminded me of my teenage years. Either way, I find myself thinking about my younger self and sobbing.

I'm not a crier, but I'm not embarrassed by this outburst. If anything, I'm relieved; so far, I've been the only woman on the Golden Gift of the Goddess retreat who hasn't broken down, and I was beginning to feel overly stony-hearted.

Still, I hadn't expected tears when I signed up for the pleasure-focused retreat. Described as a 'pussy consciousness experience', it sounded like a hedonistic weekend of sex-related partying. 'I think this might be a giant orgy,' I told my editor, feeling slightly overwhelmed but intrigued by the idea of becoming more sexually liberated.

When I arrive at the countryside retreat – the beautiful Fair Oak Farm in East Sussex – on a breezy September day, I'm greeted by its founder, sex and relationships coach Lacey Haynes; she seems serene yet purposeful, wearing a long red dress and clutching a bottle of kombucha. Haynes is perhaps best known for her unique podcast, *Lacey And Flynn Have Sex*, in which she and her husband record and narrate their sex life (one of their most popular episodes from 2022 was a discussion of their 'recent deep cosmic anal experience'). For the 16 other women on the retreat – many of whom are in heterosexual marriages with children, and have rushed straight from the office to be here – Haynes is something of a spiritual guide; most of them are part of her online coaching community, School of Whole, or are among the 4,500 people who signed up to her Sex Elevated course.

It's dark by the time we head to the thatched barn for the 'welcoming circle'. By candlelight, Haynes says we are co-creators of our own journeys, and that the universe chose for us to be at the retreat. When she asks us to go around the circle to say our names, along with one thing we want and one thing we need, I panic and mumble something about wanting to get over my tumultuous year (I recently quit my job to go freelance and moved back in with my parents) and needing to listen to myself – and through the orange glow of tealights, the others smile with understanding. Haynes explains that this weekend will help us get what we want in life through erotic and abundant joy: 'We must shift the paradigm that we have to sacrifice ourselves and bleed ourselves dry to deserve success and pleasure.' And the 'pussy' (a word I still squirm at, despite the feminist rebranding) is, apparently, at the root of it all. Indeed, Haynes' key philosophy: 'pussy consciousness' is based around the idea that physically and metaphorically, this is the most vulnerable place in the female body, and we tend to attach a lot of shame to it. But 'the pussy is a compass,' she explains. 'If we connect to it, we can see where we're misaligned. Sexual energy is the life force that brought us into being, and tuning into this is like going back to the start; the original blueprint of who we are.'

'I HADN'T EXPECTED TEARS WHEN I SIGNED UP FOR THE PLEASURE-FOCUSED RETREAT'

On our first full day, after a shared breakfast of home-made banana bread, coconut yogurt and fresh smoothies prepared by the retreat's Ayurvedic chef Nina Green, we begin with a breathing class in the barn – which involves inhaling with downward motions and exhaling to relax our vaginas and vulvas – and builds up to what Haynes dubs 'sun f*cking'. Heading outside, we lie on the grass, pull our leggings and knickers down and let the sun warm our vulvas. While some of the other women open their legs wide and lift their feet to the sky, I awkwardly keep my knees closed. The sensitive, fleshy skin starts feeling hot quickly, so we don't stay out long. We all laugh at the novelty of it, but by doing something so exposing, I start to feel a creeping sense of connection with my body, nature and the other women.

Somehow, I'm relaxing into a more open-minded version of myself. Enough so that, later in the day, I pick out tarot cards brought by another woman. The card I get is Isis, goddess of fertility, which reads 'This situation involves your past-life memories'. The deck's owner tells me not to ruminate; that I will recognise what it's telling me in due course.

Later, we re-form our circle for a class on limiting beliefs, taking those thoughts that hold us back in life and reframing them through pleasure. The words on the tarot card fill my head as I contemplate the things that stop me living joyously. I think about how, in the past, I felt so unworthy that I was self-destructive. I thought I had overcome this, but I realise that I still live with a general sense of not feeling good enough or, more specifically, that other people are better than me. There is a constant hum in the back of my mind telling me my boyfriend is smarter, more attractive and impressive; my colleagues are better writers, and my friends are more caring and grounded. The timing of the card and the class feels uncanny – or as Haynes would say, 'destined'.

She tells us to come up with a narrative that opposes our limiting beliefs while we touch our bodies. We lie in a circle on the floor, wrapped in our own blankets, and I follow the instructions: my hands run between my thighs, over my stomach, around my vulva and I repeat in my head: 'I am enough, I am enough, I am enough.' When we stand in a circle and shout our new narratives in turn, I feel the words bubble up into my throat and explode into the room.

After dinner, the ecstatic dance class begins. We are told to let the music take over. I surprise myself by moving animalistically without cringing. When the music slows to a more meditative pace, some of us get on the floor in exhaustion. That's when the crying starts. When I stand with mascara dripping down my face, I'm greeted by understanding nods; they get it. As women, expressing ourselves feels like walking a tightrope – we are told we must be strong and capable, and simultaneously that we are weak and sensitive. Much like the pussy, I suppose. Here, we can express every part of ourselves freely, and it feels liberating. I'm beginning to see why the other women are so loyal to Haynes and the safe spaces she creates.

On our final day, Haynes takes us through her 'pussy gazing' workshop. Sitting on the grass naked from the waist down, save for the blankets over our legs, we place mirrors between our thighs. Haynes instructs us where to look and how to move through the intrusive thoughts that scream 'eew'. As someone who vocally believes in removing shame and ideals about the female body, I'm frustrated that I'm judging what I see in the mirror. I feel a mental block, like I can't connect my beliefs about acceptance with my physical self.

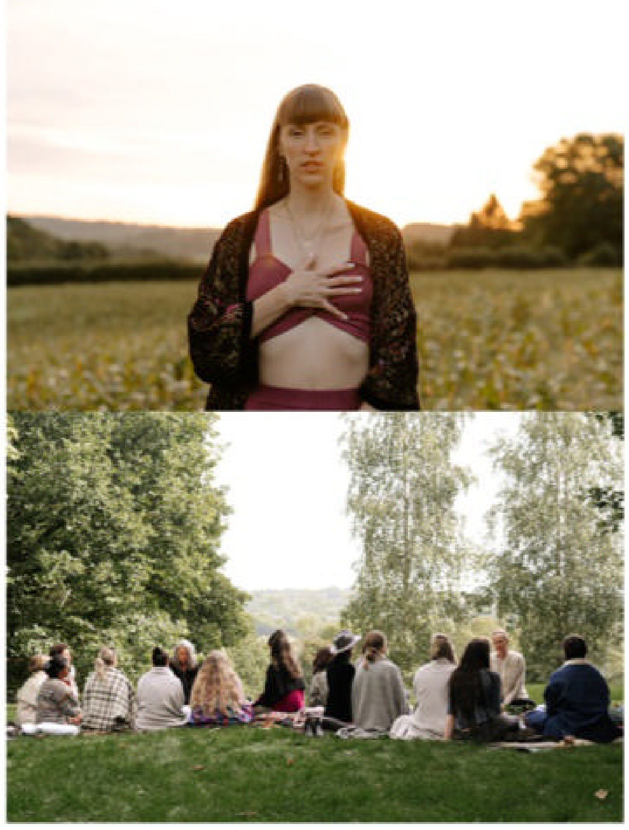
Haynes encourages us to bring pleasure to the practice by touching between our legs, running from person to person to press lube into our hands before encouraging us to stroke our pussies. I try it, but it's not exactly pleasurable; I can't escape the discomfort of disliking what I see and the knowledge that I'm surrounded by

'WE LIE ON THE GRASS AS THE SUN WARMS OUR VULVAS'

others. After the session, we talk about how we have boundaries to our eroticism – we are conditioned to have a voice in our heads that says 'that's enough' even when we want to lean into the joy. Haynes says that if we ever want to experience true pleasure, we have to be curious about our blind spots and push our comfort zones. Get friendly with our pussies. Embrace ourselves in the process.

I head straight to my boyfriend's house from the retreat and he's surprised when I turn up feeling knackered; my eyes sting and my bones feel heavy. He, like me, expected me to come back buzzing from a fun weekend. That evening, I spill out the revelation that I feel like I'm not good enough. He's floored by it, but it starts a conversation that unfolds as a momentous step in our relationship.

I went into the retreat thinking it was about sexuality – and it was, in the sense that we connected with our most sexual organs. But its biggest lesson was to surrender to joy in all its forms; to find abundance and empowerment – not shame – in the most vulnerable parts of ourselves. Now, when I need to connect to myself, I will lean into the power of my pussy and repeat: 'I am enough, I am enough, I am enough.'



Top: Lacey Haynes. Above: On the retreat, women are encouraged to express themselves freely

How to manifesturbate from Lacey Haynes

Manifesturbation (a portmanteau of manifestation and masturbation) is a progression of Haynes' pussy-gazing workshop and her most popular pleasure programme. 'I thought that if sexual energy could create connection, release and even another life, why couldn't I use it to bring my visions to life, too?' she says.

For Haynes, it's about co-creation with the universe, meaning that you are signalling to the outside world that you are ready to receive the thing you desire. If you're not spiritual, don't switch off. There is something powerful about focusing on the thing you want when you feel confident and joyful.

1 Remove shame

Be honest with yourself: what is your relationship to masturbation, self-pleasure, your body and sexuality? If you want to ask for things to come into your life then you first have to ask about yourself. You have to be open to learning about your body and deriving pleasure from it as well as being honest about how you feel about it right now.

2 Get curious

Start exploring your body without expectation. Use your hands to discover where and how you like to feel pleasure, beyond the obvious. If you hit numbness or an area that you don't like being touched, ask why. This is about trying to bring your body 'online' – waking it up and letting it send and receive signals of pleasure.

3 Put down your vibrator

Pleasure practice for many women is about orgasm. This isn't masturbation with a view to climaxing – we're looking to always put pleasure over orgasm, slowing down, tuning in and listening.

4 Choose your desire

Manifestation isn't wishing for £1m when you have no business plan. It's about being grounded in alignment with your life. Your desires should be specific – you want to make £4,000 from your latest product launch or focus on calling in your ideal partner. If you manifest for something that means something to you and is specific enough to envision, you are more easily able to focus on and achieve it.

5 Manifesturbate

To connect the pleasure with your desire, start picturing your desire while you explore your body. Close your eyes and bring visions of your desires to your mind, whether it's envisioning yourself looking at your bank account to see a specific figure or being somewhere in the world that you want to be. Feel pleasure in your body as you see these manifestations. Notice how your desires feel in your body when you touch yourself – does it feel natural and pleasurable, or do you need to continue to shift the discomfort? Can you connect with your manifestation while in a place of pleasure to accept the abundance of joy?

6 Debrief

Don't just wash your hands and be done. Think about where you felt pleasure or where things didn't sit right. If the vision didn't feel right in your body, maybe you need to rethink it. Keep coming back to the pleasure practice until you feel a full expansion and alignment – and until your manifestation materialises.

Come Together: The Secret To Deep, Meaningful, Elevated Sex (Piatkus) by Lacey Haynes and Flynn Talbot is out 1st June and available to preorder now. For more information and for details of upcoming retreats, visit laceyhaynes.com

PHOTOGRAPHY: GETTY, LACEYHAYNES.COM

‘She met me at my lowest, and she still chose to stay’

CLARE MOHAN ALWAYS BELIEVED HERSELF UNLOVABLE – BUT THEN SHE FELL IN LOVE, RIGHT IN THE MIDST OF A MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS. HERE, SHE EXPLAINS WHAT IT’S LIKE NAVIGATING A RELATIONSHIP WITH BORDERLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER

On a bright, crisp Sunday in March 2014, I was supposed to be going to play board games with a new acquaintance, Erin, and some of her mates. We’d met a few times through a mutual friend, and I was flattered to be invited. Instead, I found myself messaging her with an apology: I wasn’t sure I’d make it, as I was waiting in A&E.

I’d been going through the hardest period of my life. It wasn’t the first time I’d struggled with my mental health, but after being sexually assaulted six weeks previously, I felt like I was falling apart. I’d begun hallucinating, especially in crowded places. Once, I became fixated on a big poster in Euston station; the individual pixels morphed into pus-filled boils that seemed to pulsate opposite me. My daily commute to Hammersmith, where I worked for the local council, was punctuated by the feeling that someone else was controlling my body and wanted me to take my own life.

For weeks, I minimised what I was experiencing – until I spoke to a doctor friend who told me firmly to go to hospital. When I got there, the nurse talked me through my options. She offered to find me a bed on an inpatient ward, but it was my decision. From what felt like a long way away, I heard myself say: ‘I think I need to be admitted, please.’

When I was shown my room on the ward, I noticed there weren’t any light switches or taps, just flat buttons to press. Everything was calculated to be as safe as possible, and a nurse opened the door to check on me every half an hour. It was a huge relief. I was safe here. I couldn’t hurt myself.

It didn’t feel strange telling Erin where I was. She seemed so warm and kind, yet strong, and I instinctively knew I could trust her. Still, I was surprised when she messaged to ask if she could visit the next day. Why would she choose to have this chaos in her life? But she appeared the following afternoon clutching fluffy socks and home-cooked vegan dim sum – and then, alongside family and friends, she visited every day for the five days I was an inpatient.

I was constantly shivering, twitchy and on red alert. It was disorientating, as I still didn’t have a diagnosis. But I felt so reassured in Erin’s presence. A psychiatric ward is a pretty difficult environment to be in. Sometimes, the other patients would stop and glare at us threateningly, or yell at us for no reason. She never blinked. She even helped me find humour in it all, like the fact that pudding was always just a bowl of custard: apart from one day when, with no explanation, there was cake as well. The next day, it was back to plain mystery custard.

Erin helped me get home when I was discharged, armed with a prescription for citalopram – used for low mood and panic attacks – but still few answers. After months of pushing to be assessed by a psychiatrist, I was finally given a diagnosis: borderline personality disorder (BPD). Everything started to make sense. I learned that BPD is characterised by very intense and rapidly shifting emotions, extreme and often risky behaviour and self-harm impulses. Under the surface, people with BPD experience a chronic sense of emptiness and an unstable sense of identity. We often believe we're fundamentally unlovable.

I had been living with the symptoms for so long it felt like normality – I was just 'highly strung', I told myself. But the assault I experienced pushed me into crisis. The volume turned up on every emotion.

Before my 'breakdown', I'd found it hard to connect with people. I had a pattern of pushing people away when they got close, afraid that they'd run when they got to know me better. I'd suffered years of extreme mood swings, even attempting suicide at university.

> **'I'VE HAD TO LEARN HOW TO BE MORE PATIENT WITH MYSELF – AND HOW TO BE TOUGH'**

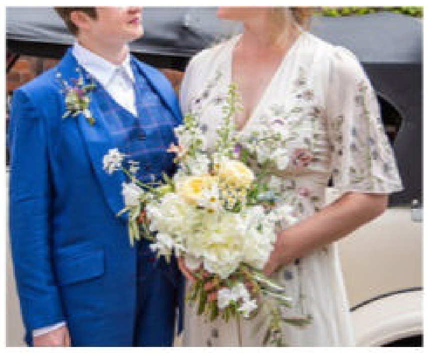
I had always thought there was something intrinsically wrong with me. But Erin wasn't fazed by any of it. She got to know me during my lowest point, and still chose to stay.

As I started having regular therapy, I saw or spoke to her most days. Within a few months, we were inseparable. On my birthday, we sat on Hampstead Heath and soaked up the mid-April sun. I felt safe, calm and certain. So, I kissed her.

I knew I loved her soon after, when she bought us tickets to a lecture on mediaeval Italian literature. It's not everyone's idea of fun, but I was fascinated, and enchanted that she'd even thought of it. We moved in together after a year.

In the early years of our relationship, I was plagued by the fear that I'd drive Erin away. Sometimes, when she got home later than expected, she found me sobbing inconsolably, after I'd convinced myself that she'd left me (and her beloved cat, and all her possessions. It wasn't logical, but the belief was overwhelming). But Erin reassured me that she loved all of me – even though it was hard for me to believe.

The unpredictability of extreme emotions with BPD is one of the hardest things for partners to deal with. In therapy, I learned that these powerful responses are often triggered by deep-seated beliefs we have about ourselves, so we're often reacting to an underlying issue rather than what is happening on the surface.



Clare and Erin married in 2021

Thankfully, those sorts of outbursts aren't the defining feature of our relationship. We love gardening, making our own wine and dreaming of starting a smallholding somewhere remote. We joke about eating 'mystery custard' when we're not sure what to have for dinner, and laugh ourselves silly over TikTok videos. But underneath, there's a core of iron to our relationship, formed by the most challenging circumstances.

After many years of antidepressants and therapy (from psychodynamic therapy to intensive group therapy), I gradually learned to cope with my triggers without lashing out. I came off medication a year ago, with my GP's support. It hasn't been plain sailing – I'm definitely more volatile than when I was medicated – but I'm in a much better place than I ever expected to be.

My relationship with Erin has travelled in parallel with my capacity to manage (and recover from) the worst of my BPD. I've had to learn how to be more patient with myself – and sometimes to be tough with myself, too. I know what my limitations are, and what I need to do to stay well. I try to run regularly and get outside every day. I have a shorter work week so I can manage my energy levels and keep on top of 'life admin', both things that affect my overall wellness. And together, Erin and I have learned the importance of communicating how we're feeling, and what we need. We're gentle with each other.

When we got married in 2021, I read a quote from the Italian poet Dante: 'Midway through the journey of my life / I found myself in a dark wood / and the clear path was lost.' That's how I felt that first day in hospital – bewildered, frightened and alone. Erin's love and support has helped me come back to myself.

Sometimes, people ask if I believe I'm loveable now; if that part of me has somehow 'healed'. I don't know if I'll ever truly believe that. There will always be a part of me that feels hollow and alone and questions why Erin would ever choose me. But that part gets smaller and quieter with each passing year. I have to believe that she sees something in me that I can't see in myself. And that's more than enough.

- *Turn the page for advice on personality disorders*

WEDDING PHOTOGRAPHY: HELEN HOWARD PHOTOGRAPHY

Everything you need to know about... personality disorders

from the Mental Health Foundation

Our personality constitutes the ways we think, feel and behave that make us who we are. For most of us, this remains fairly consistent.

However, people with a personality disorder have significant difficulties in how they think and feel about themselves and others. These difficulties affect their wellbeing, mental health and relationships with others.

Around one in 20 people in the UK has a personality disorder. They can be hard to define and diagnose, so they often go unrecognised for a long time.

What are the symptoms of a personality disorder?

A personality disorder affects how you cope with life, manage your emotions and connect with other people. You may find that your beliefs and attitudes are different from most people, who may find your behaviour unusual, unexpected or upsetting at times.

You may have difficulties with:

- Making or maintaining relationships.
- Connecting with other people, including friends, family or work colleagues.
- Managing and controlling your emotions.
- Coping with life and difficult feelings.
- Controlling your behaviour and impulses.

These symptoms often get worse with stress. As a result, you may feel isolated and alone. You may try to cope through self-harm, drug or alcohol use or suicide attempts, or also experience other mental health conditions, such as depression.

Different types of personality disorder

There are 10 types of personality disorder. They are organised into three groups based on similar symptoms.

We all experience these symptoms from time to time. However, if you have a personality disorder, you'll find these symptoms are making your life difficult.

Your symptoms may not fit exactly into one group. You may see aspects of yourself in more than one category. This isn't unusual: it can be hard to diagnose a particular personality disorder clearly.

The three groups of personality disorders are described as A, B and C. They can be briefly described as…

A Feeling suspicious of other people

You may have difficulty forming relationships with other people and think or behave very differently from others.

An example is a paranoid personality disorder, where you may feel suspicious of others for no reason and believe people are being nasty to you. You might hold a grudge or feel easily rejected.

B Finding it hard to manage your feelings or behaviour

You may find it hard to manage your emotions and swing between positive and negative views of other people. You may behave in a way others describe as dramatic, disturbing or unpredictable.

An example is borderline personality disorder (also known as an emotionally unstable personality disorder). You might have intense emotions that change quickly or worries about being abandoned, act impulsively and struggle to trust other people. You may not have a strong sense of who you are or what you want. You may self-harm or have suicidal thoughts.

C Feeling very anxious or afraid

You may have feelings of fear or anxiety that are so overwhelming they affect your daily life or relationships.

An example is an avoidant personality disorder, where you may fear being judged negatively and feel uncomfortable in social situations. You may worry a lot and have low self-esteem. You might feel lonely but avoid relationships because you fear rejection.

What causes personality disorders?

Personality disorders are complex, and what causes them isn't fully known. Most researchers believe a combination of factors can increase the risk of developing one, including:

- Trauma in early childhood, such as abuse, neglect or violence.
- A parent or caregiver who gave you little or no support, especially if you experienced a traumatic event.
- Genetics.

Not everyone who experiences trauma will develop a personality disorder. And not everyone with a personality disorder will have had a traumatic experience. There may be no clear reason why you've developed your feelings and symptoms.

Getting support

The first step is to speak to your GP. They can refer you to a specialist who can do an in-depth assessment and diagnose you. With help, it is possible for things to change and improve. It may take time, but life can become more fulfilling and less difficult.

The right treatment for you will depend on the type of difficulties you have, what's available locally and what your preferences are. You may be offered talking therapy, medication or a stay in a therapeutic community. These are places you can visit or stay for several weeks or months. They offer a form of group therapy where you can explore what it's like to have a personality disorder. You learn from spending time with other people in the group and supporting each other's recovery.

For more information, visit mentalhealth.org.uk

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Let's get it OM

NEW RESEARCH SUGGESTS REGULAR YOGA PRACTICE COULD LEAD TO A MORE SATISFYING INTIMATE LIFE. HERE, YOGI ANGIE TIWARI EXPLORES THE LINK BETWEEN POSES AND PLEASURE

There are few feelings in life that compare with the full-body calm that comes after a well-taught yoga class. With the exception, perhaps, of a satisfying sexual encounter. So it may not surprise you to learn that researchers are connecting the dots.

A study published in *The Journal Of Sexual Medicine* found that women who engaged in a 12-week yoga programme reported higher levels of desire, arousal, lubrication, orgasm and satisfaction, as well as lower levels of pain. The idea has infiltrated the digital realm, too. Not long ago, a TikTok video by @yogamama_ claiming that frog pose (see image eight, over the page) can improve your sex life notched up millions of views.

For Dr Laurie Mintz, a psychology professor at the University of Florida and author of *Becoming Cliterate*, one explanation is yoga's ability to keep you grounded in the moment. 'Yoga teaches mindfulness, which is an essential component for desire and arousal – you can't orgasm when you're thinking about how you look, your "performance" or your emails,' she explains.

A 2021 study supports this, showing positive links between mindfulness and sexual satisfaction and arousal in women. Consider, too, that yoga has been shown in countless studies to reduce stress, and that cortisol dampens desire as effectively as long toenails, and you begin to understand why yogic practice could be so powerful an intervention.

That's before you consider the physical benefits of regular practice – from the blood-oxygenating power of pranayama (controlled breathing) to the way yoga can strengthen your pelvic floor, along with your ability to orgasm. One study, published in 2022, showed that yoga significantly improved both the pelvic and mental health of post-partum women in particular.

And yet, for Cat Meffan, founder of the yoga subscription service Soul Sanctuary, it's the relationship with yourself that yoga helps you nurture that explains the link with better sex. 'It's true that being more mobile allows you to enjoy new positions, but it's so much more than that,' she says. 'Over time, yoga teaches you to look inwards, delve deeper and find an authentic connection with yourself.' It's this, she believes, that's truly behind its ability to let you be in your body in the way that real pleasure requires.

> 'YOGA TEACHES MINDFULNESS, WHICH IS AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT FOR DESIRE AND AROUSAL'

Ready to lean into the latest benefits of yoga? Here, Angie Tiwari, founder of Tiwari Yoga (tiwariyoga.com), shares a flow to get you back in your body and guide you towards a more satisfying intimate life.

Go with the flow

1

Corpse pose (savasana)

Here, you can find the freedom to enjoy sexual pleasure. 'It's common when you're close to orgasm to breathe shallowly,' says Jamie Clements, founder of breathwork platform The Breath Space. 'This can detract from the fullness of the experience. Breathing deeply creates relaxation, allowing you a deeper sense of pleasure.'

TRY IT: Lie on your back, eyes closed, legs and arms out to the side. Turn your palms upwards, soften your breath and stay for five minutes. Refrain from judgement as your mind wanders.

2

Energising breath (kapalabhati pranayama)

Centuries ago, this tantric technique was believed to delay ejaculation. Today, these claims are backed by science, too. A 2019 study found the technique to 'significantly increase duration of the sexual act', helping to prolong pleasure for both sexes.

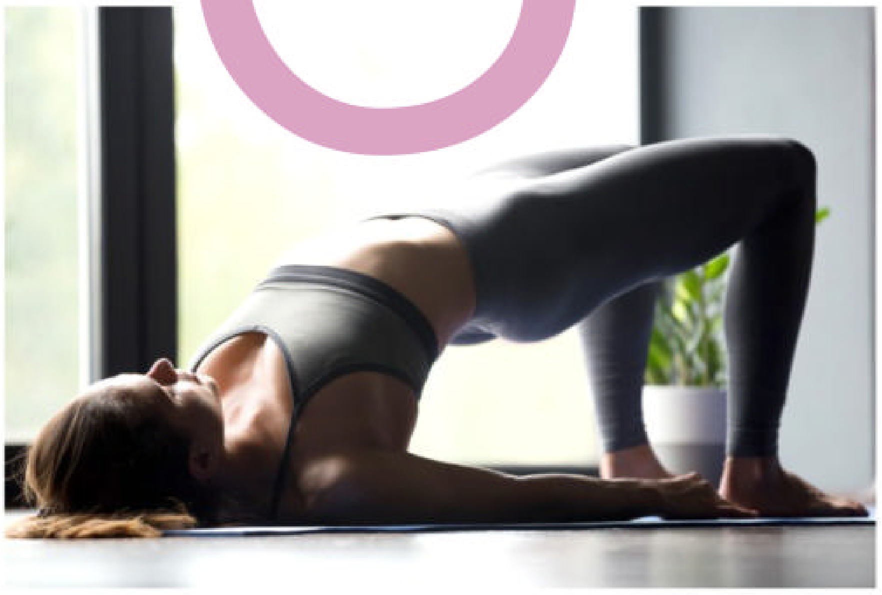
TRY IT: Sit upright, eyes closed, and forcefully exhale through the nostrils while contracting your stomach. Your inhale will follow automatically.

3

Bridge pose (setu bandhasana)

A pelvic-floor and core strengthener that will fire up your glutes and increase blood flow to the pelvic area – all of which makes the bridge a prime sexual-function enhancer, according to sex coach Rose Bonham Carter.

TRY IT: Lie down, bend your knees and ground your feet close to your glutes, hip-width apart. With your hands on the ground, lift up your glutes. As you lift, keep your head and shoulders grounded. Interlace your fingers underneath to lift higher. Hold for one minute.



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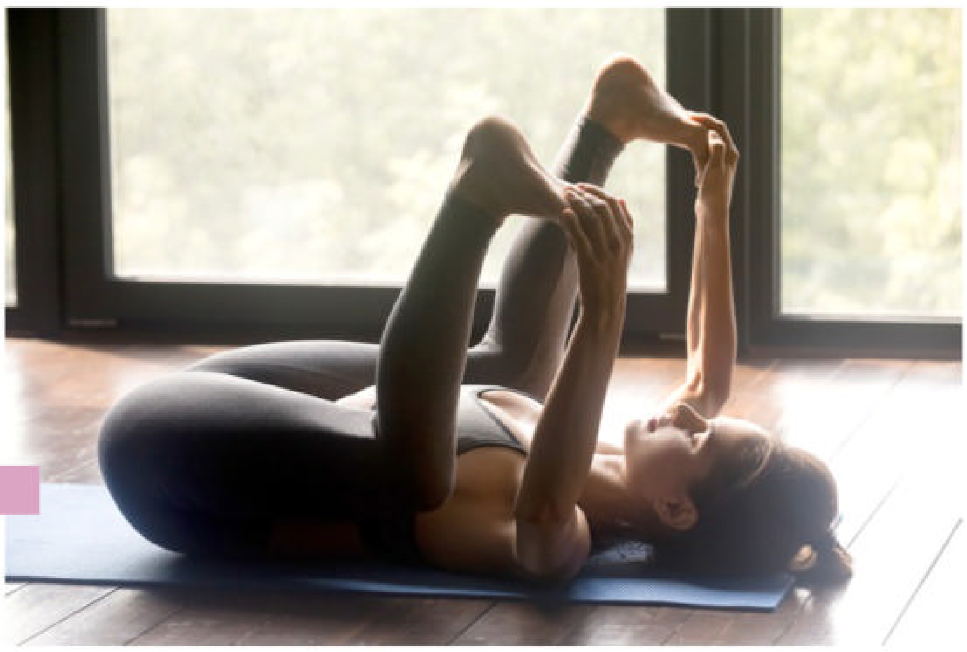
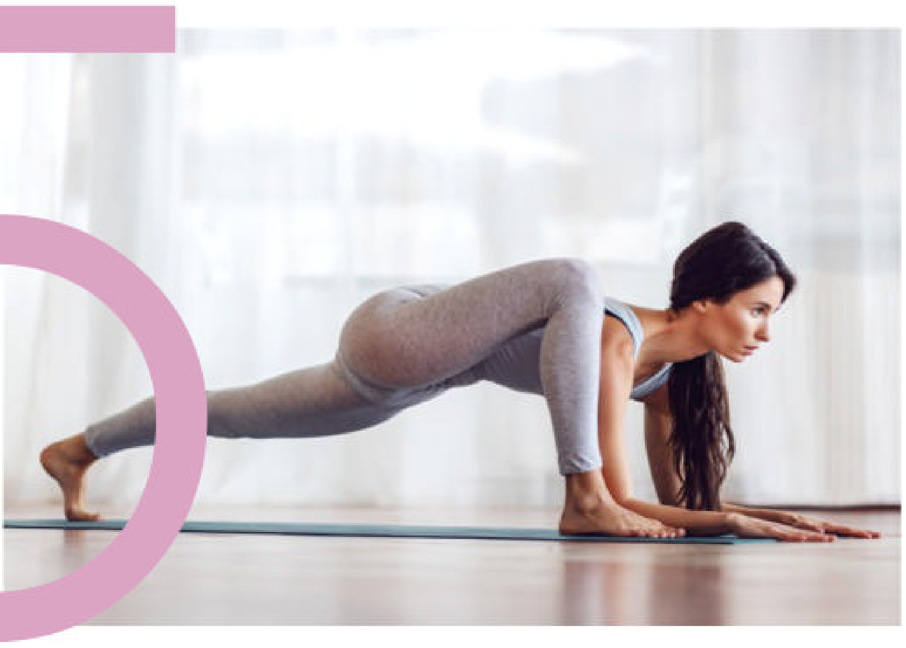


Happy baby pose (ananda balasana)

This restorative hip opener releases tension and increases pelvic flexibility, both of which are key components of a satisfying orgasm.

TRY IT: Lie on your back, legs up. Bend your knees and hold your toes. Focus on bringing your knees down, breathe deeply and hold for two minutes. Keep your head and neck grounded to avoid straining your upper back. If you feel this happening, support yourself by popping a folded blanket under your head or holding a looped strap around your feet.

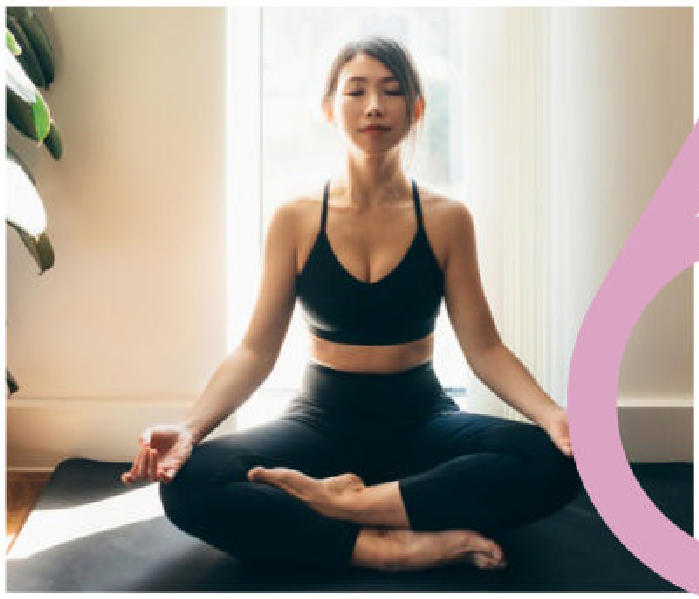
5



Lizard pose (utthan pristhasana)

Here, you're stretching your back, lengthening your spine and opening your hips, increasing blood flow to your sexual organs. It'll strengthen your hamstrings and hips, as well as improving your mobility. **TRY IT:** Start on all fours. Place one foot to the front, next to your hands, with them on the inside. Either keep your back knee down or tuck your toes under and lift. Allow your hips to sink down and lower your forearms, keeping your chest lifted. Maintain steady breathing for two minutes; slowly release. Repeat on the other side.

6



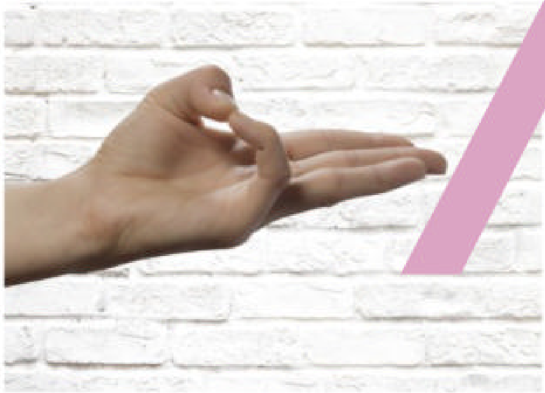
Belly breathing (adham pranayama)

Pranayama has been used for centuries for its various health benefits, ranging from lowering blood pressure to improving emotional regulation. It works like this: deeper breath increases blood flow, sending more oxygen around the body to your muscles (and your genitals). **TRY IT:** Sit upright and inhale through your nose for three counts, then exhale for six counts. As you inhale, your stomach expands, and as you exhale, it contracts. Practise for two minutes with closed eyes. Observe how you feel.

7

Water hand gesture (varun mudra)

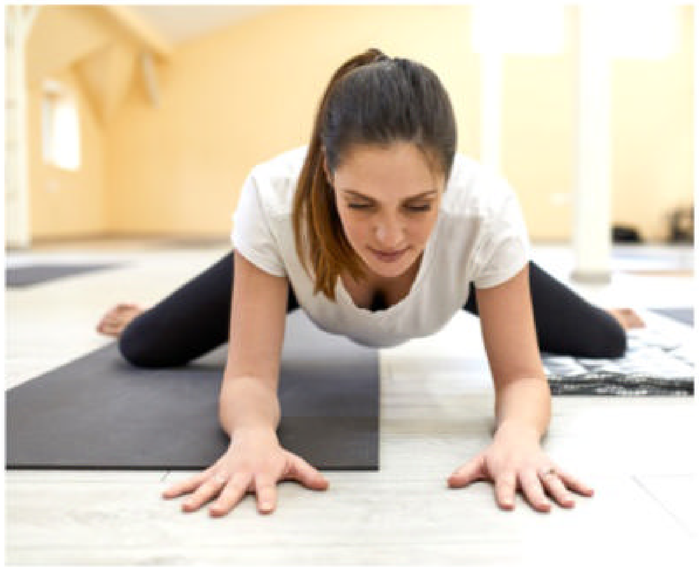
Connecting with your water element – linked in yoga to the second chakra, located in the region of your pelvis – is thought to enhance sexual expression. Sceptical? Research suggests that yoga could improve sexual function, with the effects most pronounced for women over 40. **TRY IT:** Start seated and upright. Connect your pinky finger and your thumb, and place your hands on your knees. Be aware of the connection between these points. Hold for one minute, calling your mind back if it wanders off.



8

Frog pose (bhekasana)

If you're tight around your groin, bhekasana can help to ease lingering tension while increasing blood circulation to the pelvic area – key to arousal. **TRY IT:** Begin on your hands and knees, pointing your feet and knees outwards. Widen your legs and push your hips back. You'll start to feel a stretch in your inner thighs. Hold for a minute, but remember to keep breathing. A bit much? Modify it by placing a folded blanket under your knees.



PHOTOGRAPHY: STEPHANIE RAUSSER/TRUNK ARCHIVE, GETTY. IMAGES POSED BY MODELS. ALWAYS TAKE CARE WHEN EXERCISING AND DISCUSS ANY HEALTH CONCERNS WITH YOUR DOCTOR BEFORE STARTING

Spotlight on...

THY.SELF

FOUNDER OF DISRUPTIVE WELLNESS BRAND THY.SELF CHLÖE PIERRE ON HOW SHE'S WORKING TO MAKE THE INDUSTRY MORE ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE

Chlöe Pierre believes wellness should be for everyone

This Week's Events
HELLO DAY
OWN YOUR SEXY
TEA & CA

The wellness industry historically has a lot of stereotypes – think 'perfect' bodies and expensive juice cleanses. The word 'wellness' is defined as 'the state of being in good health' (both mental and physical) – something we all want to achieve. But with stereotypes comes inevitable exclusion, as many minority groups are led to believe that wellness is not 'for' them.

Enter Chlöe Pierre, founder of thy.self, the game-changing wellness brand that offers consulting services to companies, a rich events programme and an inclusive community of members welcomed from all backgrounds. Pierre believes wellness should be for everyone. Since the launch of thy.self, she's made waves in the industry, changing the narrative by working with some of the UK's biggest brands.

Her background is in fashion PR and marketing. 'When I started working for PR companies, it would be surprising to see another woman of colour and there was hardly anyone over a size 12,' she says. 'I'd notice microaggressions – comments about my weight or people touching my hair. I felt I didn't have a voice to say anything as I was the minority.'

Turning to wellbeing to help her cope with the pressures at work, she noticed it was a similar story in her personal life. 'Far too often, I was the only Black or plus-size woman in the yoga studio,' she says. 'It just felt like an exclusive club.'

thy.self has 21,000 members across its platforms

Determined to open up the industry, Pierre went travelling to explore the origins of ancient wellbeing – including yoga. 'I learned that these things almost always came from a region in Africa or Asia, so we *are* included in the wellness space,' she says. 'It gave me a sense of where we're going wrong in Western society.'

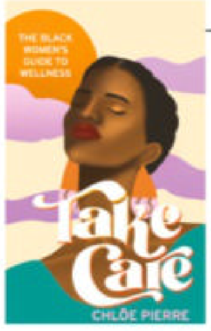
So, in 2018 she created her own community-led platform 'to allow people from minority backgrounds to experience wellbeing practices and go to these spaces together, so we don't feel intimidated'.

Pierre left her job to go freelance, allowing her the time to work on setting up thy.self. She organised a launch event and invited 40 influencers along, who provided valuable social media marketing. 'The community began to grow quickly from there,' she says.

As well as providing a supportive community online and with in-person wellness events, thy.self offers consulting and content creation services, corporate workshops and bespoke events. It also arranges opportunities for members to go together to try different wellness trends – from meditation circles to self-massage. 'We started with small events, but now we have 21,000 members across our newsletter and social media platforms combined,' says Pierre.

In 2019, thy.self launched an event in New York, its first push to go global. And in the past four years, it has consulted for SoulCycle, Adidas and ASOS, run a wellbeing festival with Monki, a trainer competition with Nike and a store takeover with Urban Decay. During the pandemic, its team used their contacts to provide placements for young people who were out of work. 'Youth wellbeing is a key focus for us,' says Pierre.

With so many strings to its bow, thy.self is changing the game from the inside. Is the tide turning? Pierre believes so. 'There are so many more opportunities, spaces to occupy and resources available,' she says. 'The wellness world is a nicer place to be nowadays – and I'm proud to be part of that change.'

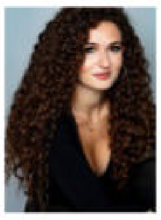


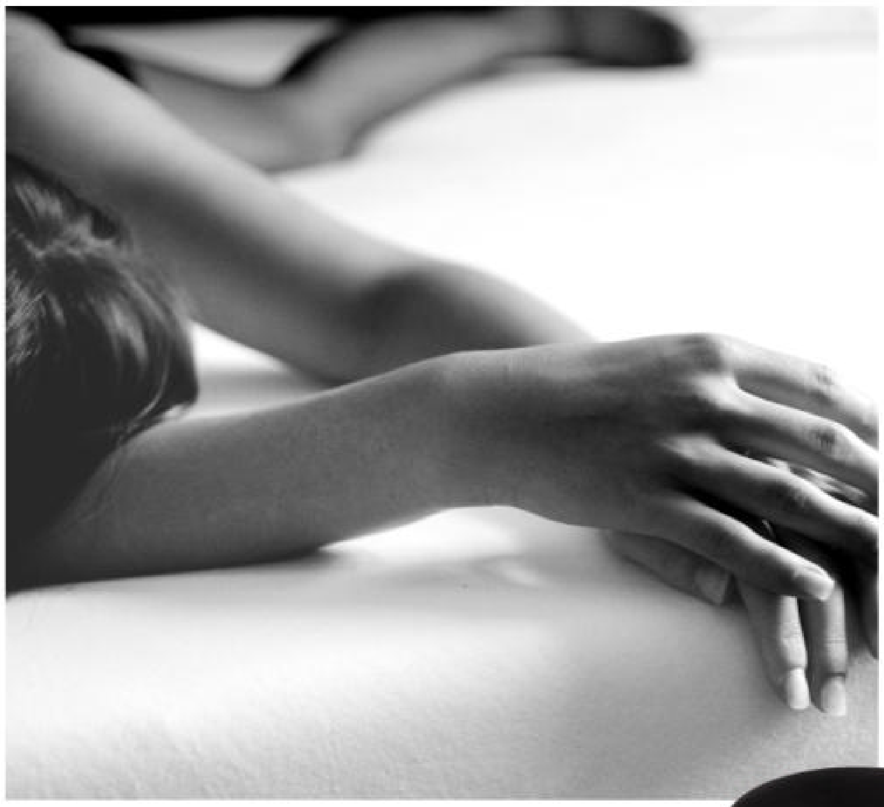
Take Care: The Black Women's Guide To Wellness (Headline) by Chlöe Pierre is out now. To find out more, visit thyself.space or follow @thy.self on Instagram

WORDS: ELLA DOVE. PHOTOGRAPHY: SEYDA KARIMPOUR

THE WELLNESS INFLUENCER

HEALTH AND WELLBEING EDITOR ARIELLE STEELE SHARES HER FAVOURITE DISCOVERIES FOR BODY AND SOUL





CAN'T RESIST

If you're looking to tone your glutes and calves and improve strength and flexibility, you need some resistance bands in your home workout kit. I love the blue hues of this set from EvolveYou, the fitness app created by powerhouse trainer Krissy Cela, with three levels so you can work your way up from light to heavy resistance.

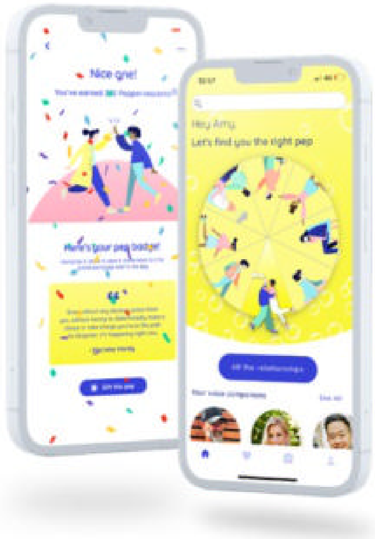
EVOLVE YOU
EVOLVE YOU
EVOLVE YOU

RESISTANCE BANDS, £35 for a set of 3, store.evolveyou.app

GET SOME PEP

Whether you've messed up at work or you're struggling with parenting, sometimes all you need is a kind, reassuring voice in your ear. Now, thanks to Australian app Hey Lemonade, you can hear the exact words you need, exactly when you need them. The app is full of tailormade three-minute pep talks for a variety of everyday woes, designed to circuit-break stress and encourage optimism.

Download Hey Lemonade on Apple or Android; subscribe for £7.49 a month



PHOTOGRAPHY: TREVOR LEIGHTON, DAVID COHEN/UNSPLASH

8 GREENS
MADE FROM REAL GREENS
SPINACH
ALOE VERA
WHEATGRASS
KALE
BLUE GREEN ALGAE
SPIRULINA
CHLORELLA
BARLEY GRASS
ORIGINAL
DIETARY SUPPLEMENT
10 TABLETS

3 SEXUAL WELLNESS PRODUCTS TO TRY

1 Lube is severely underrated – but it can make every encounter smoother and more enjoyable, whether you use it with a partner or a sex toy. As well as being completely natural and organic, I love that this bottle will look pretty on your bedside table or bathroom shelf. Maude Shine Organic Lubricant, £20.49, unfabled.co

shine.
maude

2 Nourish your vulva with this hydrating balm formulated with avocado, jojoba, calendula and beeswax – perfect for use after sex, or it can be used daily if you're experiencing vaginal dryness due to menopause. Baûbo The Balm, £13.50, cultbeauty.co.uk

3 This lush massage oil is infused with fig and orange to stimulate the senses. Bonus: it'll leave you both feeling silky soft. Coco De Mer Enraptured Figment Massage Oil, £35, sephora.co.uk

GOING GREEN

A veggie-packed green juice is a wellness mainstay for good reason: it's full of vitamins and essential phytonutrients. And now you can get all the benefits without touching a blender. Enter 8Greens, the world's first effervescent tablet made from real dehydrated greens, including spinach, kale, wheatgrass and spirulina. Follow in the footsteps of fans such as Oprah Winfrey, the Obamas and Drew Barrymore and dissolve one per day in a glass of water to support your immune system, brain, skin and more. They're available in three delicious flavours – my favourite is Lemon Lime.

8GREENS EFFERVESCENT TABLETS, £14 for 10, available at Planet Organic, Amazon and Selfridges

Feeling the burn?

IT'S SOMETHING 40% OF WOMEN WILL EXPERIENCE IN THEIR LIFETIME, YET CYSTITIS GETS LITTLE ATTENTION AND INADEQUATE TREATMENT. BELLA EVENNETT-WATTS ASKS WHY – AND WHAT CAN BE DONE

Some things simply can't wait. Like ice cream melting. A car needing its MOT. Or when 'bursting' for a pee is no longer metaphorical. That's how I feel when I have cystitis.

It was June 2020 when, with a familiar burning sensation, I knew I couldn't wait any longer. Many public toilets were closed under lockdown restrictions, so I found a discreet bush where I squatted and peed. When I emerged, relieved, I was confronted by a community enforcement officer. I tried to explain that I had cystitis, a common type of urinary tract infection (UTI) that makes you need to pee urgently, and it's painful when you do. But he'd never heard of it before and handed me a fixed penalty notice: £150. It would double if I didn't pay within the timeframe and, he said, I could even face prosecution.

The fine was eventually waived after I sent the council my medical records, but the embarrassment still stung. Around 40% of women will experience cystitis at some point in their lives, but I still had to prove my suffering was a real justification. Despite all the strides we've been making in women's health recently – talking openly about periods, the menopause and more – many of us are still suffering from cystitis in silence.

What is cystitis?

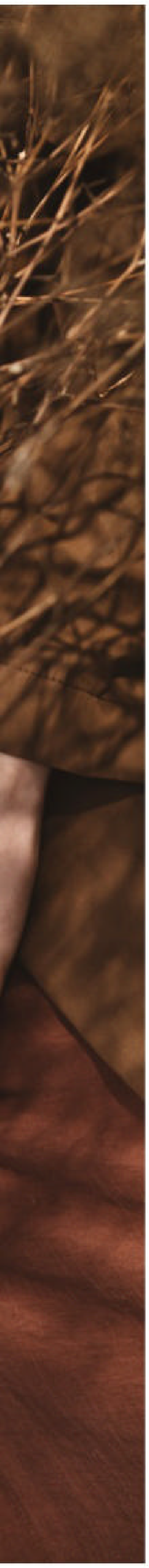
'Acute cystitis is inflammation of the bladder, which can lead to severe pain and needing to pee more often. Most sufferers recover quite quickly, but for some, the symptoms keep coming back and never go away,' says Dr Catriona Anderson, a GP with a special interest in women's health and UTIs (focusmedicalclinic.co.uk). If you have three or more episodes in the space of 12 months, this is considered recurrent cystitis – something I've suffered from since I was 16.

From writhing in pain as a teenager during a four-hour car journey to the swallow-me-up moment when I wet myself in a shop, cystitis has long been a looming dread; a constant undercurrent of 'When next?' My unwanted companion has got in the way of work, sex and my social life.

Cystitis can even influence how we feel, thanks to bacteria-releasing toxins: 'E coli, the bacteria responsible for 90% of UTIs, releases lipopolysaccharides into your bloodstream, which creates a shock-like reaction,' explains Dr Anderson. 'It can make you feel confused, hot, shivery, shaky – not yourself at all.'

Not just a 'honeymoon' condition

Many of us feel embarrassed to say we have cystitis, thanks to its reputation of being caused by a busy sex life. But this isn't the whole picture. 'The act of sex does push germs around the urethra, which is why it's always a good idea to pee before and after sex, but cystitis can occur any time – sex or not,' says Dr Anderson. 'For one of my patients, the heartbreak following a recent break-up led to a massive



flare-up. She hadn't been having sex, but for her, stress played a major role.'

Sugar, caffeine, dehydration, acidic foods and Jacuzzis can all be triggers. And although cystitis is often considered a young women's affliction, perimenopause can heighten the chances. 'Oestrogen helps lubrication within the vagina. During perimenopause, it starts to decline, so we lose that plumpness within our vaginal walls, and we lose lubrication,' says GP and The Perimenopause Doctor Dr Shahzadi Harper (theharperclinic.com). 'This increases the risk of cystitis.'

Even genetics can have an influence. 'There's a mutation on bladder cells called TLR5 SNP; 10% of the population have this, while 60% of people with recurrent UTIs have it,' says Dr Anderson.

Unspoken pain

As with so many afflictions that disproportionately affect women, cystitis doesn't receive the medical attention it deserves. Minor, one-off cases often clear up with hydration, regular peeing (flushing out the bacteria) and natural supplements such as D-mannose, which works against the bacteria E coli and klebsiella. But many women experiencing consistent or severe pain are turned away from surgeries – or just told to drink water and cranberry juice.

Specialists like Dr Anderson are few and far between, and many medics have limited expertise – the consequences of which can be unbearable for the 1.6m women in the UK who suffer from a chronic UTI, where symptoms aren't just recurrent but constant.

In 2016, a group of sufferers set up the Chronic Urinary Tract Infection Campaign (CUTIC) to raise awareness and spearhead calls for better research and development into effective testing and treatment methods. CUTIC hears from women suffering debilitating, painful conditions all the time. Take Barbara, for example, who has suffered UTIs since she was 18 and cannot have sex with her husband without it causing immense pain. Or seven-year-old Freya, who 'felt like she was peeing shards of glass'. Freya's mother, Sonia, flew her to America for a three-month course of antibiotics because her acute UTI wasn't treated effectively here.

Progress needed

According to Carolyn Andrew, director of CUTIC, there's still too much reliance on outdated tests, which are based on research from the 1950s. As a result, she says many patients are being told they have no infection and are sent away with painkillers, or even told they are imagining symptoms.

Dr Anderson believes we need to adopt a slower approach to antibiotics; doctors frequently prescribe intensive three-day courses, but she says studies show that courses lasting five to seven days are more effective. She notes that GPs are often reluctant to prescribe antibiotics at all for 'less severe' cases of cystitis, due to very real concerns about antibiotic resistance. But this is leaving thousands of women dealing with pain.

It seems this is an issue that mirrors much of the attitude in healthcare towards women's pain, yet, frustratingly, long-term (chronic) UTI isn't specifically mentioned in the Government's new Women's Health Strategy. Carolyn Andrew believes this needs to be addressed urgently.

In the meantime, we can all bring this lonely issue away from the solitude of toilet cubicles (and discreet bushes). The more honest we can be about the disruption and pain it causes, the better. I've kept my fixed penalty notice, as a reminder of the small win I felt I gained against cystitis. But what I (and so many women like me) need is tangible change.

5 WAYS TO HELP REDUCE CYSTITIS SYMPTOMS

Try these expert tips:

1. THROW OUT YOUR THONGS

'They're a superhighway for bacteria,' says Dr Anderson. 'Cotton underwear is best and wear looser jeans or leggings with elastic, rather than tight clothing that rubs. Also, have showers instead of baths, as water can carry bugs up the urethra.'

2. AVOID ACID AND SPICE

'Citrus fruits, tomatoes, vitamin C, artificial sweeteners, coffee, tea, carbonated and alcoholic beverages and spicy foods may exacerbate symptoms in some,' says Alex Glover, senior nutritionist at Holland & Barrett.

3. TRUST YOUR GUT

Dr Sammie Gill, registered dietitian at probiotic brand Symprove, says looking after gut health could help prevent cystitis: 'An imbalanced gut microbiome may increase the opportunity for UTIs. Uropathogens in the gut have been shown to be a risk factor for UTIs in those with kidney transplants.'

4. BUILD UP IMMUNITY

Uva-ursi has unique antiseptic properties and compounds to help maintain bladder health. Echinacea can also help support the body's immune system. Try Uva-ursi & Echinacea Cystitis Oral Drops, £10.85, avogel.co.uk.

5. GET COMFORTABLE

For menopause-related cystitis, Dr Harper recommends using a vaginal moisturising gel to help relieve dryness, discomfort and itching. Try Replens MD Long Lasting Vaginal Moisturiser, £11.49, Boots and Superdrug.

CRANBERRIES: MIRACLE CURE OR MYTH?

'There's mixed evidence,' says Glover. 'Cranberries are rich in proanthocyanidins, which may help the urethra lining and prevent bad bacteria build-up, but the evidence isn't consistent.' That said, the NHS guidance says cranberry products may ease symptoms.

PHOTOGRAPHY: STOCKSY

GOOD NIGHTS WITH
COUNTRY LIVING AT DREAMS

The new Country Living Collection of premium bed frames at Dreams brings traditional style and supreme comfort to every bedroom.

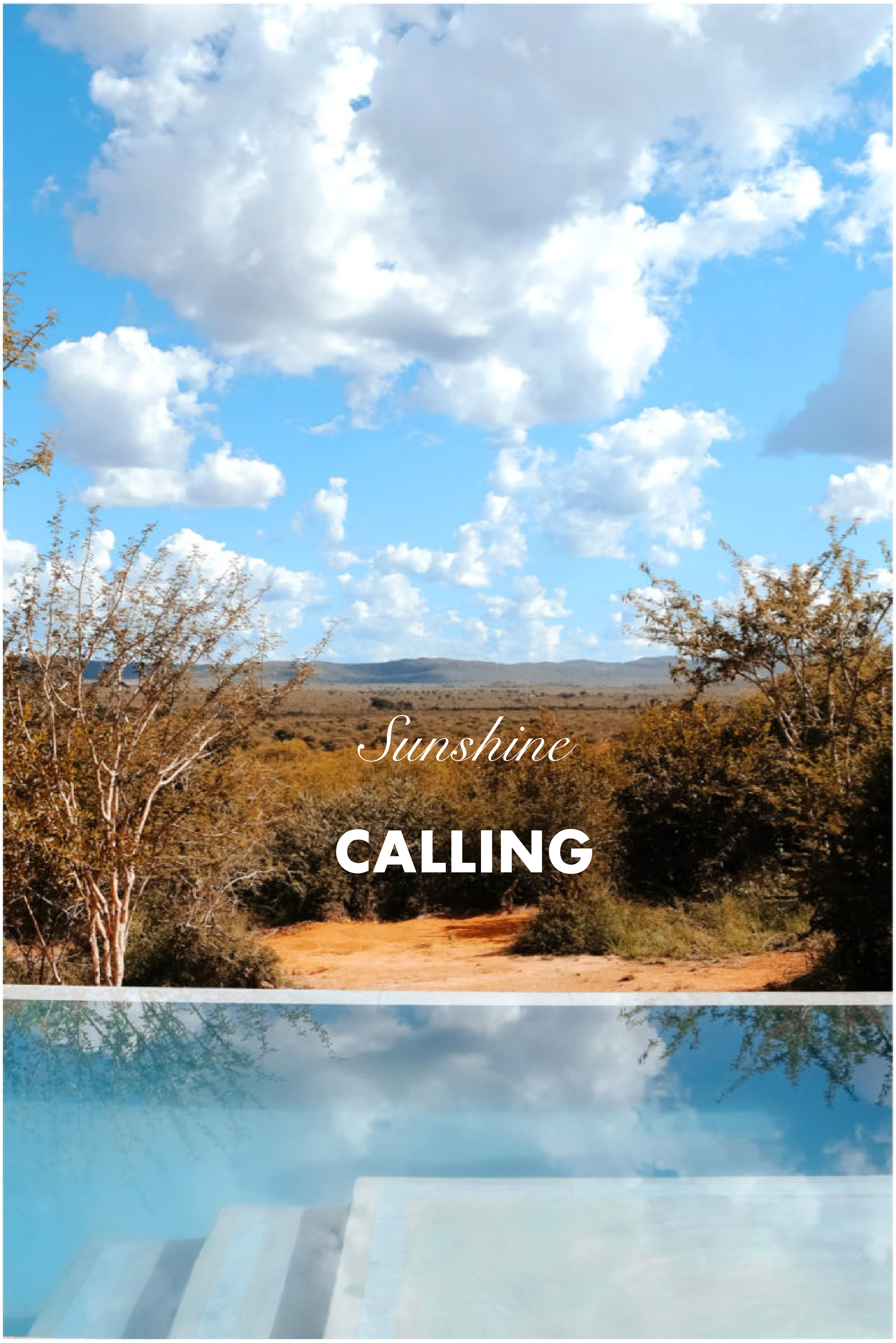
These rustic-inspired frames are handcrafted to create a weathered-oak finish. There are two stylish headboard choices – textured rattan (Tollymore, above) or luxurious linen (Ullswater, right) – designed to complement every style of decor. And with sprung wooden slats that flex with the movement of the mattress, you're sure to enjoy the perfect night's sleep.

See the full *Country Living* Collection at dreams.co.uk/country-living

COUNTRY LIVING | Dreams

ESCAPES

Edited by
Sarah Tomczak

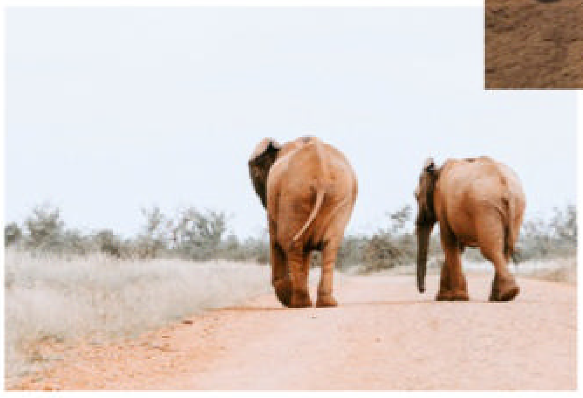


Sunshine CALLING

IF YOU'RE DREAMING OF BIG ADVENTURES AND WARMER CLIMES – BE IT ON A SAFARI OR A SUNLOUNGER – WE HAVE JUST WHAT YOU NEED RIGHT HERE…

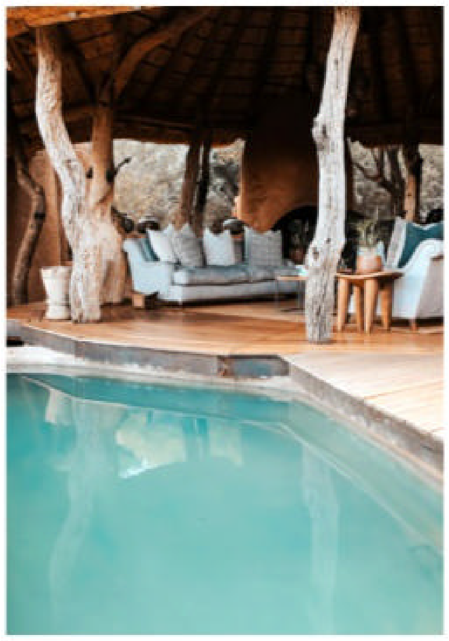
MADIKWE SAFARI LODGE, SOUTH AFRICA

Madikwe, meaning 'Africa in its majesty' does not fail to live up to the name. It sits, 300km outside Johannesburg, in the uniquely beautiful North West province on the border of Botswana and is one of the largest exclusive private game reserves in South Africa. Madikwe's wooded hills give way to flat savannah plains, characterised by deep red earth and sekelbos thickets, extending into the drier, yellow-sanded Kalahari Plains in the west and the Marico River to the east of its 75,000 hectares. This stunning diversity of biomes is roamed freely by Africa's 'big five', as well as the endangered African wild dog, which the reserve is famous for its help in preserving.



Sophie gets close to African wildlife with her guide, Mitch

There are three Madikwe safari lodge sites in the reserve; one family-orientated and two private. We are staying at the luxury four-bed lodge, Dithaba ('mountain' in Setswana), which boasts jaw-dropping hillside views over the whole reserve. A night's stay here includes two game drives and the services of a private guide and tracker, chef, hostess and housekeeper, and a nanny on request. The lodge was designed to grow and settle into its surroundings, built using traditional clay-brick techniques. The shapes of the spaces follow the lines of the hills and the thatched roof, limewashed walls and gnarled trees growing up through the building ensure you feel immersed in nature at all times.



Above: the luxurious Dithaba lodge, with breathtaking views, brings the outside in

The inside-out indulgence of the lodge continues with a wraparound porch from your personal suite, complete with plunge pool and outdoor rainfall shower, which I enjoy each morning. The rooms are full of little luxuries, with local artworks, a fresh supply of snacks, a fireplace and a bubble bath with natural salts. Every morning and evening, the housekeeper, Rosina, writes a note on the chalkboard by the bed – 'Sweet dreams' or wishing 'wonder' for one's day. To which I reply with 'Thanks' and that I had indeed had a heavenly rest! These little touches don't stop throughout the day either – a cold coconut piña colada delivered to the Land Cruiser on the drive, home-made orange cakes for breakfast, fresh coffee, Amarula shots, epic sundowner stops and each night, on our return, dinner is laid out on the grass by the pool, surrounded by candles. Pinch me.

We have the most amazing tracker, Mitch, with us for the whole stay. He has an incredible knowledge of not just the animals but every part of the environment; identifying bird calls, mapping the cosmos, spotting animal tracks, analysing dung – every drive is an adventure, and just when you think it can't get any better or more interesting, it does. Mitch takes us close enough to smell the musk of the endangered wild dogs and hear a cheetah munching on a springbok kill. True 'wow' moments. The drives are early morning, waking to the sounds of the birds, and early evening, as the predators start to appear, the sun starts to drop and the shadows lengthen. On the last evening, we are driven back through the deep bush and, at first, we think we've taken a wrong turn, but as we drive onwards, flickering lanterns appear through the darkness and the bush comes to an opening. A surprise private dinner is served – barbecue-style, with Champagne on arrival for us and our guide – where we debrief on the day's events. We eat South African delicacies and sip Pinotage under the blanket of stars while the sounds of the bush dance around us. An experience I will never forget.

SOPHIE BURGHAM

ROOMS AT DITHABA AT MADIKWE SAFARI LODGE FROM £800 A NIGHT ALL-INCLUSIVE, WITH ACTIVITIES (MADIKWESAFARILODGE.CO.ZA). VIRGIN ATLANTIC (VIRGINATLANTIC.COM) OFFERS RETURN FLIGHTS TO JOHANNESBURG FROM £622. SOUTHAFRICA.NET

AVANI + & CHAWENG HOTEL & BEACH CLUB, KOH SAMUI

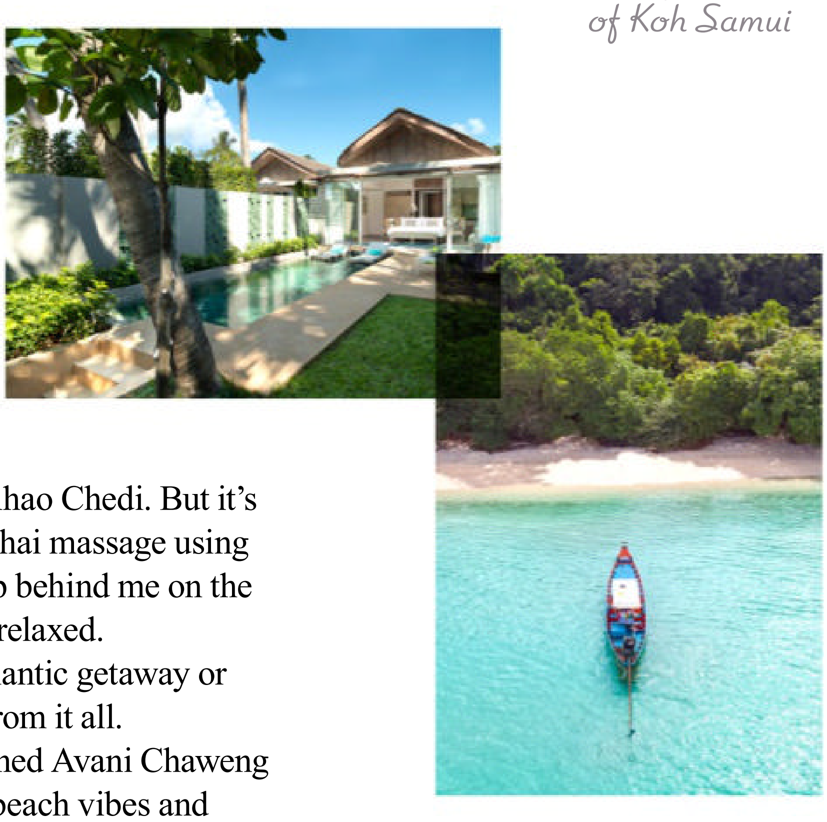
Culture and relaxation are to be found on the beautiful island of Koh Samui

A cool flannel and an ice cream are the first things that greet me when I arrive at Avani+ on Koh Samui, a short flight from Bangkok. I am then led to my pool villa, one of 58 rooms, which is surrounded by greenery and has its own gate (with doorbell!), courtyard and, yes, plunge pool. There are all the usual mod cons, plus refillable toiletries to eliminate single-use plastics.

Once unpacked, I head to the Essence restaurant, which offers local and international cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner. The sticky mango rice is a highlight, as is the floating breakfast – a large tray placed in the pool, so I can bob around next to it as I eat! I love the weekend barbecue – eating on the beach with my toes in the sand – where entertainment comes in the form of a fire show: an enthusiastic troupe throwing flaming torches in the air.

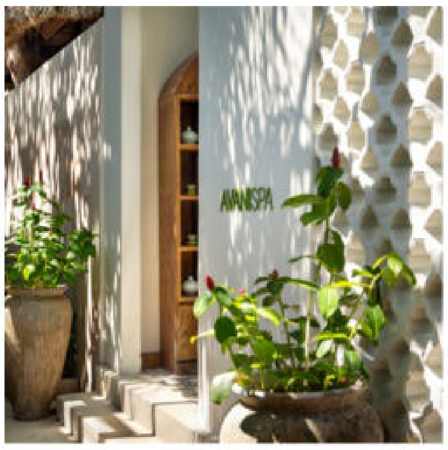
The rooftop lounge – above Essence – is great for sundowners, followed by a visit to beachside restaurant The Island View, just 5km north, where I dine on spicy tom yum soup and tangy minced pork salad.

I tear myself away from my secluded villa to go kayaking in the mangroves, but there is also paddleboarding and hiking on offer if I prefer. A great trip is taking a traditional longboat to neighbouring islands for snorkelling. One of them, Koh Madsum, is home to dozens of free-roaming pigs, descended from a family of four rescued from a market by the owner of the island's beach bar, Mr Kitt. For culture vultures, there are also many temples to visit, such as Laem Sor Pagoda and Wat Khao Chedi. But it's tempting to while away the hours in the spa. I try a traditional Thai massage using hot poultices and just when I think it's over, the masseur hops up behind me on the table to really undo those knots. I leave refreshed and blissfully relaxed.



Above: take a longboat ride to explore neighbouring islands or get pampered in the tranquil spa (below)

With a laid-back yet friendly vibe, Avani+ is perfect for a romantic getaway or for solo travellers who want to get away from it all.



My next stop takes me to the newly opened Avani Chaweng Samui Hotel & Beach Club, with Miami beach vibes and touches of 1950s Americana. The restaurant, bar areas and 80 rooms and suites are all decorated in retro chic with flashes of pop art that provide plenty of Instagram opportunities (I even have a pop art portrait painted of myself!).

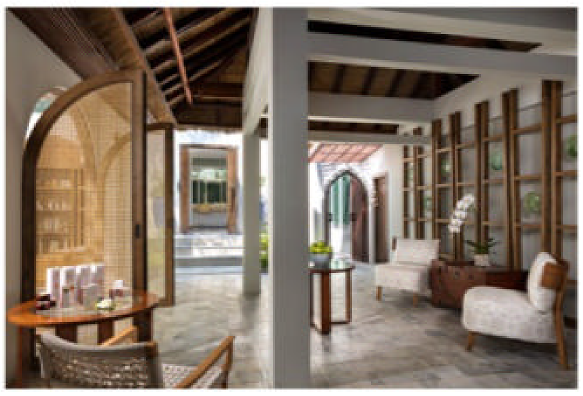
This is a resort for families and friends: the SEEN Beach Club hosts pool parties at weekends, where I dance to DJs and enjoy a cocktail at the swim-up bar. One morning, I join a yoga class and even attempt paddleboarding in the sea, before giving in and heading to SEEN again for its delicious tacos, loaded with crab meat, fish ceviche, guacamole, pomegranate and wasabi mayo.

Venturing out, I visit the Big Buddha at Wat Phra Yai temple, a 12-metre gold statue built in 1972, and the Grandfather and Grandmother rocks near Lamai Beach. They resemble parts of the male and female body, and the locals are very proud of them! The story goes that a couple, on their way to meet a wife for their son, drowned and their bodies washed ashore and turned into rocks.

Koh Samui is a tropical island paradise showcasing the best of Thailand: food, culture, scenery, beaches – perfect for peace-seekers and partygoers. Heaven.

AMY ATKINSON

POOL VILLAS FROM £190 A NIGHT AT AVANI+ SAMUI. POOL-VIEW DOUBLE ROOMS FROM £120 AT AVANI CHAWENG SAMUI HOTEL & BEACH CLUB (AVANIHOTELS.COM). THAI AIRWAYS (THAIAIRWAYS.COM) OFFERS RETURN FLIGHTS TO BANGKOK FROM £853PP. BANGKOK AIRWAYS (BANGKOKAIR.COM) FLIES FROM BANGKOK TO KOH SAMUI FROM £102PP

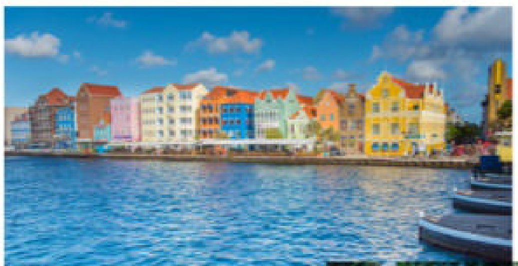


SANDALS ROYAL CURAÇAO

The Dutch Caribbean island is known for its pastel-coloured colonial architecture and pristine beaches

First things first. Having landed on the Caribbean Island of Curaçao still shamefully unsure how to pronounce it, I'm delighted to find that our airport driver, Clifford, is my go-to for inside information.

After establishing that it's Kuur-ah-sow, my other main takeaway is that the candy-coloured houses we pass are the legacy of a 19th-century governor who complained that too many white buildings gave him a headache. Only later was it discovered that he owned a paint factory. The story may be apocryphal, but the resulting vibrant colours bring cheer to the mountainous and almost desert-like vista as we make our 40-minute journey to Sandals Royal Curaçao.



We arrive just in time to catch the spectacular sunset. Sipping our welcome cocktails and admiring the view of the resort's amazing two-level 'Dos Awa' infinity pool, which seems to melt into the sea, I can already feel my post-flight weariness fading, helped by the generous free-pouring of gin by the bartender.

While I've been on all-inclusive holidays before, they've been more memorable for the things *not* included. But with unlimited à la carte dining, plus all the drinks we can handle, at Sandals, no expense is spared. With that in mind, we work our way through the sushi menu at Gatsu Gatsu (the shrimp tempura and seared tuna roll are spectacular).

Our room has a beachfront balcony so I can enjoy that astonishing sunset throughout our stay. The bathroom boasts a Mary Quant-style flower mirror and signature Red Lane Spa toiletries. The tropical scent of the shea and lotus probiotic body lotion is so gorgeous that a bottle ends up in my suitcase.

After a dreamy night's sleep (rose petals on our bed!), we jump on a couple of Dutch-style bikes, taking care to avoid the iguanas that wander the lush gardens, ready to explore.

The resort opened last June and sits on the 3,000-acre Santa Barbara estate. A leisurely cycle takes us past the 351 rooms and suites that include private poolside and seaside bungalows, which come with their own butlers, and use of one of Sandals' shiny Mini Coopers.

Above: watch the sun set from a beachfront room, or curl up in one of the heart-shaped beach seats for two (below)

With eight restaurants and 13 bars, you're never far from your next meal or drink. We try the three food trucks and mix and match: melt-in-the-mouth beef from tapas bar La Palma and fish kebabs from Toteki give us a taste of local cuisine – fresh but not spicy.

I'd been a bit apprehensive about the brand's USP of couples only, but the vibe is friendly and relaxed, and there are many activities if you tire of gazing into each other's eyes.

The sea is fringed with divinely soft sand and the free watersports are a no-brainer. Certified divers get up to two free scuba dives a day. Instead, I have a wobbly go at paddleboarding, then zone out in a heart-shaped beach seat for two.

Leaving the resort is tough, but a memorable boat trip is the Klein Curaçao Catamaran Cruise Beach Break (islandroutes.com; from US$138pp) with snorkelling and the chance to see the local turtle colony. Another must-do is a tour of the capital, Willemstad (dundutours.com/nl; $20pp). The town's architecture, with its colourful buildings, makes strolling round feel more like being in Copenhagen.

A foodie delight is a hands-on Caribbean cooking class at the studio of Dutch chef Helmi Smeulders (helmismeulders.com/cooking-class; $99pp). But my favourite spot remains the infinity pool that took my breath away on our first night. As I float, listening to gentle reggae drifting across from the swim-up bar, I don't need Bob Marley to urge me not to worry about a thing.

KAREN SWAYNE

SEVEN NIGHTS ALL-INCLUSIVE IN A SUNCHI LUXURY BEACHFRONT ROOM FROM £3,139PP, INCLUDING RETURN FLIGHTS WITH KLM FROM LONDON HEATHROW VIA AMSTERDAM. PRICE VALID FOR 8TH SEPTEMBER 2023. SANDALS.CO.UK; 0800 597 0002

PHOTOGRAPHY: SVEN ELLSWORTH, BRONWYN KNIGHT, ADAM BRUZZONE. PRICES AND CURRENCY CONVERSIONS CORRECT AT TIME OF PRESS.
ALWAYS CHECK THE FCDO TRAVEL ADVICE FOR THE LATEST INFORMATION ON SAFETY, SECURITY AND HEALTH. VISIT GOV.UK/FOREIGN-TRAVEL-ADVICE

Travelling is one of life's greatest joys. Not only does it create everlasting memories, but allows us to reflect on what matters to us, inspires us with different ways to live and gives us a chance to reset and recharge. From adventure to culture, city to sunlounger we have collated our favourite *Red* Escapes. Whether you choose to stay close to home or explore further afield, we have a holiday for you. You'll find even more destinations, latest availability and exclusive online offers at redescapes.com.

Sarah Tomczak

Editor Sarah Tomczak

THE RED ESCAPES GUARANTEE

- Many of our trips can now be booked with low deposits, starting from just £75pp.
- Your money is safe because your trips are protected by one of the following schemes: TTA, ABTA, AITO, ABTOT or Global Travel Group's consumer protection guarantee scheme.
- Flight-inclusive trips are also ATOL-protected. This Government-backed scheme safeguards your money and will assist you if a company goes out of business.
- If there is any reason why your trip may be cancelled or rescheduled, our experts will be in touch.

ABTA The Travel Association

ATOL PROTECTED

AITO The Specialist Travel Association

Travel Trust Association

ABTOT Financial Protection for Travel

OUR TRAVEL PARTNER

***Tripsmiths** partners with leading tour operators and media brands to deliver exclusive travel experiences.*

TRIPSMITHS

Red ESCAPES
READER OFFER

Join fellow adventurers on an all-female TRIP TO JORDAN

LEARN ABOUT THE LIVES OF JORDANIAN WOMEN ON A FASCINATING TOUR OF A MIDDLE EASTERN HAVEN

Jordan is a mystical and enigmatic land, untroubled by the woes of some of its neighbours and safe for women to travel together, taking the time to get to know one another and meeting the women who call this country home.

On an eight-day group trip, you'll first explore Amman, Jordan's capital, before heading south to the incredible Wadi Rum Desert. Your adventure continues the following morning on an exhilarating 4x4 experience across it's sands.

You're bound for Petra next, stopping en route for a dip in hot springs. You'll join a family for dinner in Petra, taking the opportunity to learn how everyday life unfolds in Jordan and sampling the local food. A special visit to Petra's incredible monuments by candlelight is bound to be a particularly memorable and atmospheric moment on the expedition.

The trip concludes with two nights in a resort on the Dead Sea. Take time to relax on these shores, experience how it feels to float on the salty and buoyant lake, find shade around the pool or indulge in the spa.

Try the traditional lamb dish, Mansaf

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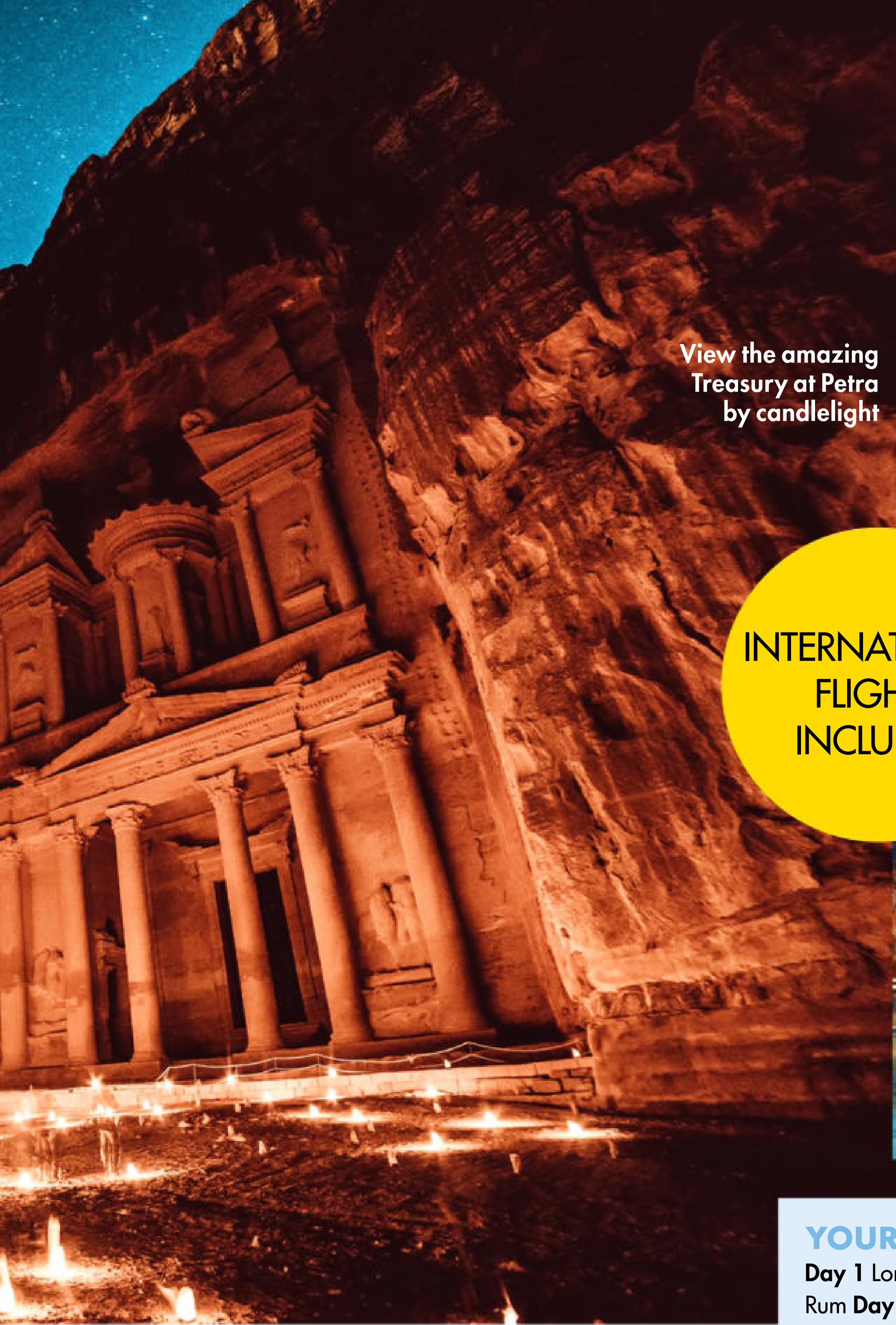
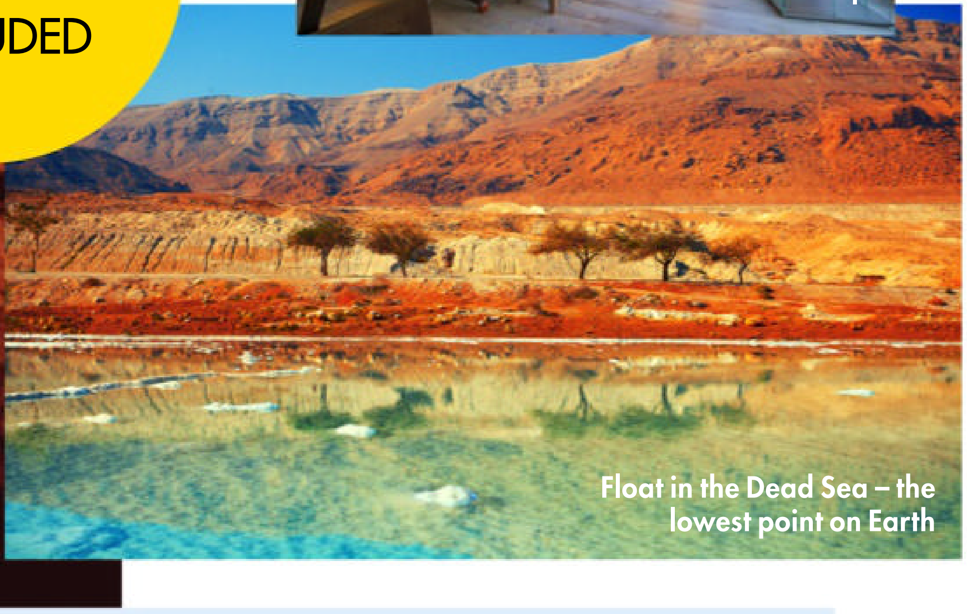


View the amazing Treasury at Petra by candlelight

Visit the King Abdullah I Mosque in Amman

Stay in the incredible Wadi Rum UFO desert camp



Float in the Dead Sea – the lowest point on Earth

INTERNATIONAL FLIGHTS INCLUDED

Reasons to book

ALL-FEMALE TRAVEL

Ideal for solo travellers to join other female adventurers, or for groups of friends or family.

MEET THE WOMEN OF JORDAN

From henna artists to shepherds and homemakers, you'll meet Jordanian women and get a glimpse into their lives. You will also join a family for dinner in Petra.

CINEMATIC LANDSCAPES

A must-see destination on any itinerary, the otherworldly terrain of the Wadi Rum Desert has been used in films, from *Lawrence Of Arabia* to *Star Wars: The Rise Of Skywalker*.

SEE PETRA BY CANDLELIGHT

The ancient sandstone city has temples and tombs carved into the cliffs, including the impressive Treasury, seen in *Indiana Jones And The Last Crusade*. You'll witness it at night when lit by candles in an atmospheric display.

YOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 London to Amman **Day 2** Amman **Day 3** Wadi Dana and Wadi Rum **Day 4** Wadi Rum and Petra **Day 5** Petra **Day 6** Ma'in Hot Springs and the Dead Sea **Day 7** Dead Sea **Day 8** Amman to London

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Experience Jordan's rich heritage at Petra, Amman and more.
- Enjoy a traditional Bedouin henna demonstration and stay in a camp in Wadi Rum.
- Swim in the restorative waters of the Dead Sea.
- Visit the hot springs at Ma'in.
- Stay in a combination of three-star and five-star hotels for six nights and the Mohammed Mutlak desert camp for one night.
- Enjoy seven breakfasts, three lunches and five dinners.

ALSO INCLUDED

Return flights from London to Amman, group transfers, desert Jeep tour.

PRICE

From £2,149pp*

DATES

5th to 12th November 2023

HOW TO BOOK

Call 02045 862 513, quoting RED JORDAN MAR23. Visit redonline.co.uk/jordan for more details.

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement £350 (excludes Day 3 Wadi Rum camp). Deposit 20%. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. Travel insurance is not included but compulsory for this trip and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel (ATOL-bonded).*

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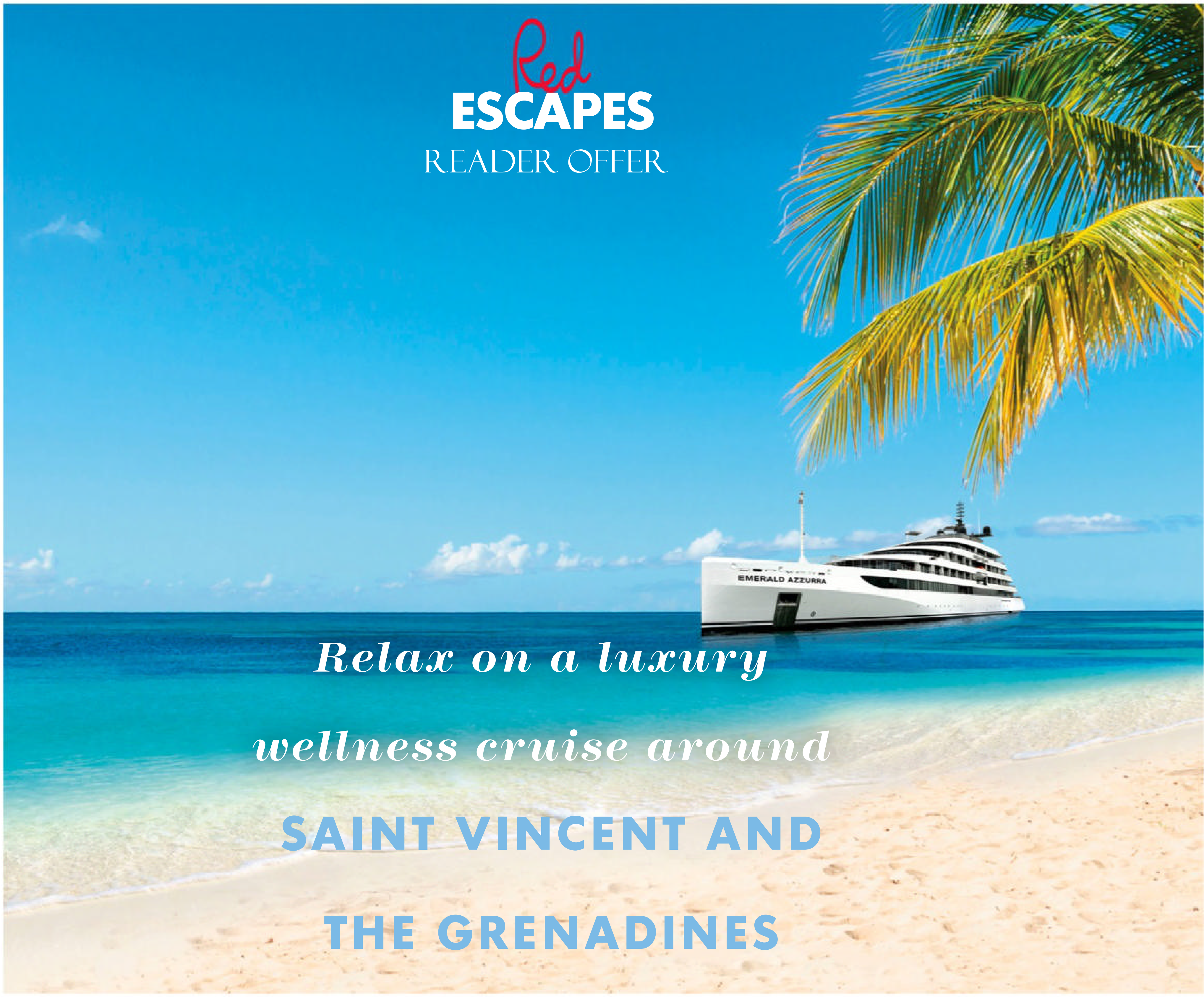

Relax on a luxury wellness cruise around SAINT VINCENT AND THE GRENADINES

WHITE SAND BEACHES LAPPED BY TURQUOISE WATERS AWAIT YOU ON THIS WELLNESS ESCAPE TO THE UNFORGETTABLE ISLANDS

Escape the stresses of everyday life and restore your mind, body and soul on this very special seven-night cruise aboard luxury yacht Emerald Azzurra. You can work towards your personal wellbeing goals while soaking up the magic of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines.

The popular itinerary is carefully curated to offer premium relaxation. Book ahead for 2024 to join sunrise and sunset yoga sessions, Pilates on the beach, long walks along soft sands, group meditations and plenty of swimming, with the opportunity to practise mindfulness in some of the Caribbean's lushest locations.

You'll sail to the Tobago Cays, an archipelago in the southern Grenadines, famous for its tranquil, uninhabited islands, and Saint Vincent, where the bustling harbour offers plenty of opportunities for shopping. Grenada's Carriacou Island, known for its coral reefs and clear, shallow waters, is also on your itinerary.

You'll be sailing on Emerald Azzurra, a luxury yacht boasting a well-equipped Elements Spa, infinity-style Aqua Pool, à la carte and buffet dining options with fresh local produce and 50 beautifully appointed cabins. With a maximum of 100 guests and a crew of 72, Emerald Azzurra has an intimate, welcoming atmosphere, perfect for de-stressing.

Reasons to book

VISIT PARADISE ISLANDS

As you sail around Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, you'll dock at several dreamy islands, such as the uninhabited Tobago Cays, with their colourful coral reefs and powder-soft beaches, and Bequia Island, where you'll discover forested hills and tranquil bays.

MINDFULNESS ACTIVITIES

Group yoga, Pilates and meditation sessions are available throughout your cruise, both on Emerald Azzurra and on the islands. They're a great way to release tension and stress as you sail away from the worries of everyday life.

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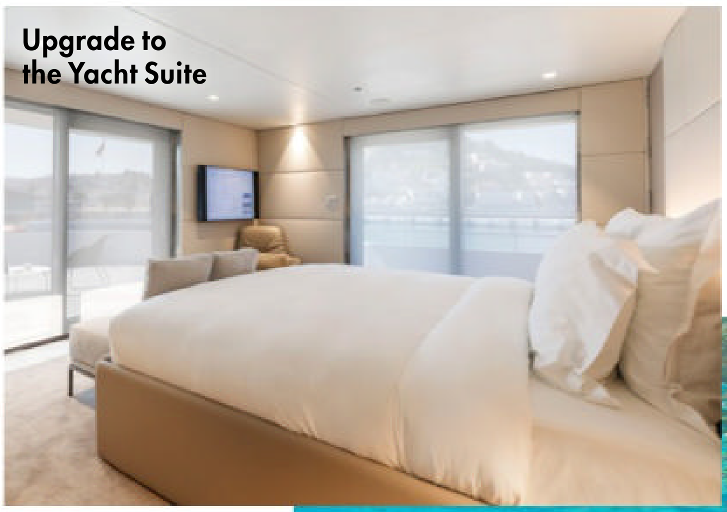
visit redescapes.com/offers

SAVE 20% WITH THIS SUPER EARLYBIRD DISCOUNT

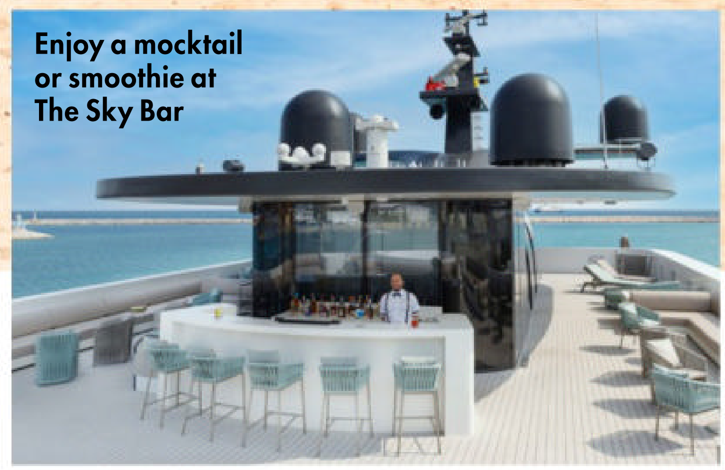
Visit the beautiful islands of the Caribbean



Upgrade to the Yacht Suite

Snorkel in the crystal-clear waters

Take an outdoor yoga session



Enjoy a mocktail or smoothie at The Sky Bar

HEALTHY DINING

There are plenty of healthy options at La Cucina Dining, which serves fresh, locally sourced food, crafted by expert chefs. Healthy drink options are included, too, with smoothies and low-alcohol drinks on the menu.

BOTANICAL GARDENS

On Bequia Island, you'll have the chance to explore the impressive botanical gardens, thought to be some of the oldest in the western hemisphere. Here you'll find vibrant tropical blooms and a wide variety of trees. It's a great place to connect with nature and enjoy peaceful walks.

YOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive Bridgetown, Barbados **Day 2** Board Emerald Azzurra **Day 3** Tobago Cays **Day 4** Port Elizabeth, Bequia Island **Day 5** Saint Vincent Island **Day 6** Union Island **Day 7** Mayreau Island **Day 8** Carriacou Island, Grenada **Day 9** Bridgetown, Barbados **Day 10** Arrive in UK

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Cruise for seven nights on Emerald Azzurra.
- Stay for one night in a hotel in Bridgetown, Barbados.
- Take part in sunrise and sunset yoga and Pilates sessions on board and on shore.
- Go on guided beach runs and walks.
- Enjoy group meditation and cycling trips on Gocycle electric bikes.
- Eat all meals on board with healthy options included.
- Enjoy a daily sundowner mocktail as well as drinks on board, with smoothies and low- and no-alcohol options**.
- Take a guided volcano hike.
- Receive a $100 voucher for the Elements Spa, salon or one-to-one fitness sessions.
- Use the Marina Platform and toys.

ALSO INCLUDED Return flights from London, airport transfers, spa, gym and sauna access, Missoni towels and robes, ESPA products.

PRICE From £4,465pp* inclusive of your 20% *Red* Escapes discount
DATES 8th to 17th March 2024
TO BOOK, CALL 01615 160 008, quoting RED WELLNESS MAR23. Visit redonline.co.uk/caribbean for details.

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing an Oceanview Stateroom. Includes 20% discount, 10% of which is the Super Earlybird discount, subject to availability. Payment must be made in full 12 months before departure; if full payment is not received 12 months prior, the Super Earlybird offer will be removed. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement applies. Deposit required. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. **Beer and soft drinks included with lunch and dinner only. Travel insurance is not included. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Images used may not reflect your actual experience. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Emerald Cruises.*

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RED READERS ARE INVITED TO THE RED CITY

Choose where you stay in
VIBRANT MARRAKECH

STAY IN TRADITIONAL ACCOMMODATION AND EXPLORE THE CITY KNOWN FOR ITS SOUKS, SPICES AND SNAKE CHARMERS

With warm weather all year round, mouthwatering food and a captivating history reflected in its architecture, Morocco is a brilliant location for a cultural yet relaxing getaway.

Take a trip to Marrakech – the 'Red City' – and stay in a stylish riad close to all of the most captivating sights, set against the backdrop of the towering Atlas Mountains.

As you wander around the spectacular city, you'll be charmed by the intricate Moorish architecture and opulent gold leaf and stucco archways seen in many of the grand buildings.

There'll be time to explore the bustling medina, enjoy the atmosphere in Jemaa el-Fnaa square, bargain for a souvenir in the maze of souks and watch the sun set behind the beautiful Koutoubia Mosque.

You will enjoy a special Moroccan dinner on your first night, which is a great chance to acquaint yourself with the wonderfully flavoursome cuisines of the country.

There are two excellent accommodation options to choose from: Riad Almaha, which is rated as one of the top five boutique hotels in Morocco, and the Riad Nesma.

Taste the flavours of Morocco or book a cooking class

Shop in the souks around Jemaa el-Fnaa, Marrakech's main square

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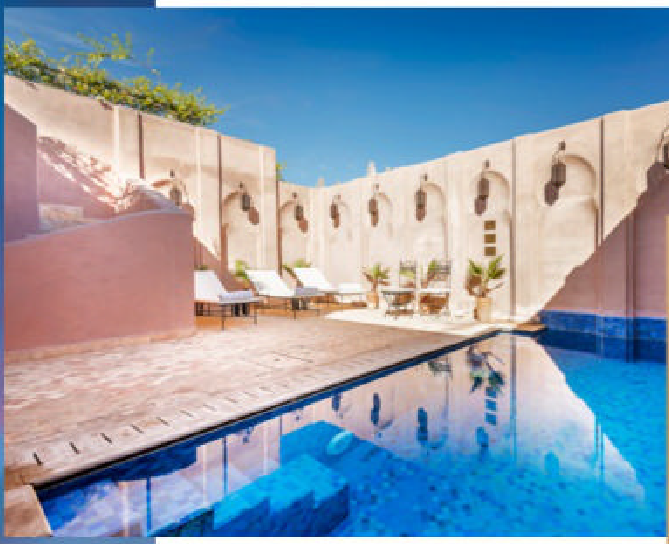
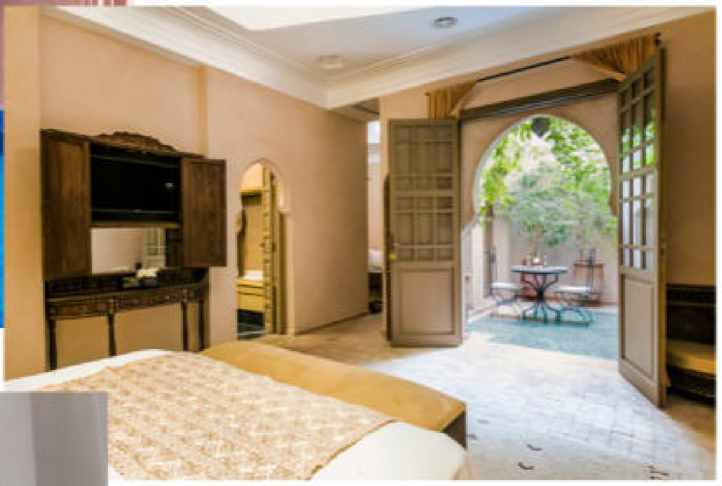
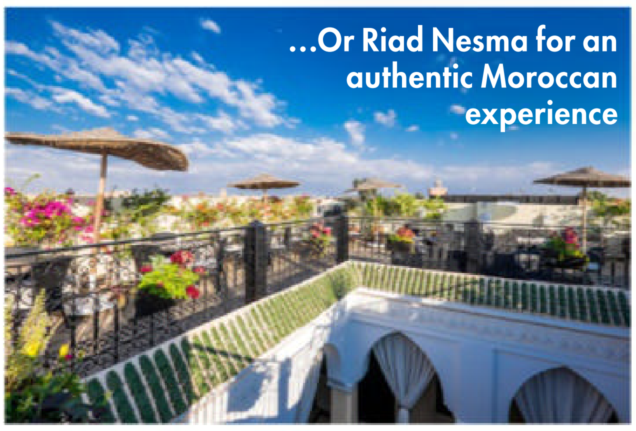
Watch the sun set over the Koutoubia Mosque



Choose to stay at Riad Almaha, one of the top five boutique hotels in Morocco…





…Or Riad Nesma for an authentic Moroccan experience

Reasons to book

ENJOY MOROCCAN FOOD

From the traditional tagine, a hearty stew, to b'stilla, a fragrantly spiced pastry, there is so much to explore.

VISIT THE BUSTLING SOUKS

Experience the hustle and bustle in the labyrinthine streets of one of the world's most exciting places to shop.

EXPLORE JEMAA EL-FNAA

Marvel at snake charmers, fortune tellers, acrobats and musicians in North Africa's busiest square.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

You'll have the chance to try hot-air ballooning to view the Atlas Mountains, go quad biking in the Jbilets Desert or join a cooking class.

YOUR ITINERARY

Day 1 Arrive in Marrakech
Day 2 Medina tour **Day 3** At leisure
Day 4 Depart Marrakech

ALSO INCLUDED Return flights from London Gatwick, group airport transfers and a local guide for excursions.

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO…

- Spend four days in Marrakech.
- Choose your accommodation.
- Take a guided tour of the old medina.
- Enjoy three breakfasts and a welcome dinner in a typical Moroccan restaurant.

CHOOSE RIAD NESMA FOR A TRADITIONAL STAY

A few steps from Jemaa el-Fnaa and the Bahia and Badi palaces in the medina district, Riad Nesma has a sundeck, a wellness area and a sauna. Each of the Nesma's rooms has a private bathroom, TV and radio. Some overlook the patio.

PRICE From £479pp*
DATES 8th to 11th May (other dates available throughout 2023)
TO BOOK, CALL 02045 862 670, quoting RED RIAD NESMA MAR23
Visit redonline.co.uk/riadnesma for more details.

CHOOSE RIAD ALMAHA FOR ULTIMATE LUXURY

Located in the heart of the Kasbah – the oldest part of Marrakech, where the royal stable once stood – Almaha is perfectly placed for exploring the medina. The hotel features a traditional hammam, where you can relax with an indulgent treatment.

PRICE From £795pp*
DATES 8th to 11th May (other dates available throughout 2023)
TO BOOK, CALL 02045 862 829, quoting RED RIAD ALMAHA MAR23.
Visit redonline.co.uk/riadalmaha for more details.

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement on request. Deposit 30%. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. Travel insurance is not included but compulsory for this trip and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual experience. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Stay is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel (ATOL-bonded).*

TO DISCOVER more exclusive short breaks and travel offers, visit redescapes.com/offers

Red ESCAPES EXCLUSIVE OFFER

FREE CREMANT, CANDLE AND BEAUTY GIFT

Relax and reset with a spa stay at the SCOTTISH SEASIDE

ENJOY THE COASTAL SCENERY WITH A STAY AT THE SEA-FACING GOLF VIEW HOTEL & SPA IN NAIRN

The relaxing seaside town of Nairn is the perfect spot for a refreshing getaway. Here you'll find a peaceful paradise of white beaches, championship golf courses and a variety of fine seafood restaurants.

Golf View Hotel & Spa in Nairn boasts panoramic views across the Moray Firth, a sleek spa and a restaurant with exceptional seafood dishes. It's the perfect retreat for experiencing the beauty of Scotland's coastal scenery.

Our exclusive offer includes a 10% discount on spa treatments in the soothing Coast Spa and you'll also receive an Ishga gift.

You'll have dinner both nights of your stay, so you can enjoy seasonal dishes such as seared scallops with confit pork cheek or sea bream with mango and cucumber salsa. Dine at the Hickory Restaurant and enjoy the stylish surroundings of leather, marble, velvet and wood with floor-to-ceiling windows allowing you to drink in the shoreline panoramas as you eat. There'll also be a delicious afternoon tea included in your stay.

The bar has an extensive range of single malt whiskies

Take time out in the Coast Spa

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- Two night stay with dinner, bed and breakfast.
- Afternoon tea with a glass of Champagne.
- Thermal spa experience.
- Bottle of Cremant de Loire 'De Chanceny' Brut NV on arrival.
- An Ishga gift worth £90 and 10% off spa treatments.
- A complimentary The Coorie Company candle.

PRICE

From £385pp for two nights*

DATES

Stays until 20th December 2023

TO BOOK, CALL

0843 809 1506, quoting RED GOLF VIEW

VISIT

redonline.co.uk/golfview for more details and to see the full itinerary.

**From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room, subject to availability. Price and offer correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. Travel insurance is not included and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual experience. This offer may be sold through other selected brands. Stay is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Crerar Hotel Group.*

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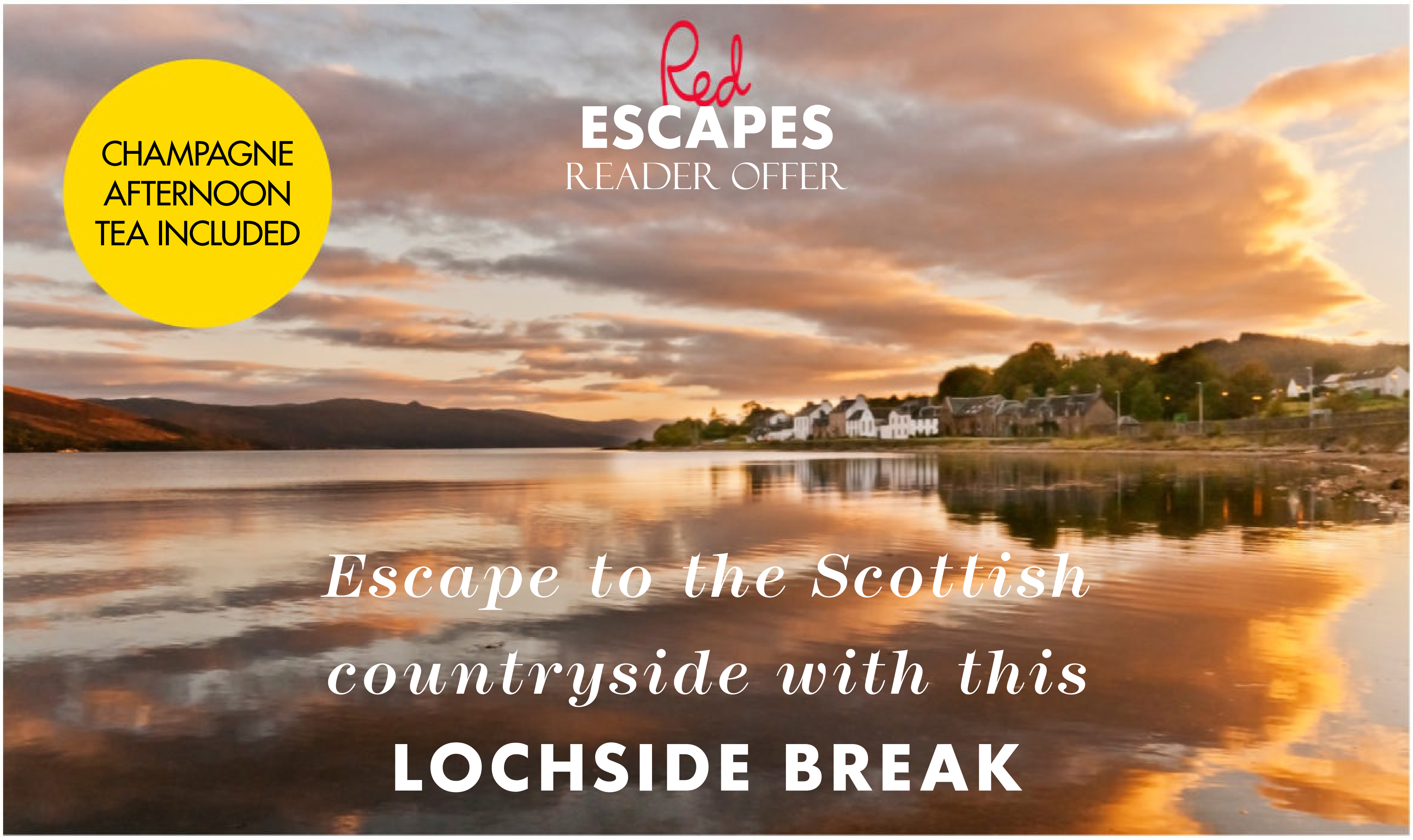

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CHAMPAGNE AFTERNOON TEA INCLUDED

Escape to the Scottish countryside with this LOCHSIDE BREAK

CONNECT TO NATURE AND UNWIND WITH A STAY AT THE MAGNIFICENT LOCH FYNE HOTEL & SPA IN INVERARAY

The spectacular Loch Fyne Hotel & Spa is just a short walk from the enchanting town of Inveraray and Inveraray Castle, overlooking the still waters of the loch.

Loch Fyne borders Loch Lomond and the Trossachs National Park, so there are endless opportunities for countryside walks around the hotel. With our exclusive offer, you'll have dinner both nights in the Cladach Mòr Bistro, as well as afternoon tea with Champagne. You'll be served the finest teas or coffee, Victorian-style finger sandwiches, warm scones with clotted cream and strawberry preserve and cakes while enjoying views across Loch Fyne and the Cowal Hills.

You'll also have the chance to unwind with a thermal spa experience in the hotel's sleek spa. The treatments at Shore Spa are personally tailored using Ishga products from the Hebridean Isles. The indoor pool, outdoor hot tub, sauna and steam room are all perfect for true relaxation. You'll get an Ishga gift worth £90 and 10% off any spa treatments with our offer.

Sample some local delicacies in the Cladach Mòr Bistro

Enjoy a sumptuous afternoon tea

WHAT'S INCLUDED...

- Two night stay with dinner, bed and breakfast.
- Afternoon tea with a glass of Champagne.
- Thermal spa experience.
- Bottle of Cremant de Loire 'De Chancény' Brut NV on arrival.
- An Ishga gift worth £90 and 10% off spa treatments.
- A complimentary The Coorie Company candle.

PRICE
From £390pp for two nights*

DATES
Stays until 20th December 2023

TO BOOK, CALL
0843 809 1480, quoting RED LOCH FYNE

VISIT
redonline.co.uk/lochfyne for more details and to see the full itinerary.

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NATURALLY BEAUTIFUL RUGS

COUNTRY LIVING AT CARPETRIGHT

WOLLERTON IN IVORY, FROM £159

The new Country Living Collection of rugs, crafted from the finest natural, sustainable fibres, offers the perfect way to add an extra layer of style and comfort to your home.

Wollerton (above) is the epitome of informal indulgence. Hand-woven from pure wool (the original sustainable material), its chunky-knit design imbues every room with a homely ambience. Also available in 100% wool are hand-loom-woven Chalfield, with its eye-catching, two-tone effect, and Hardwick, with its braided finish.

Syon is made from 100% jute. This natural, sustainable fibre is incredibly hardwearing, making Syon the ideal rug for even high-traffic areas, such as the hall and kitchen.

Designed for indoor and outdoor use, Holkham, crafted from recycled fibres, offers a simple textured-weave design; while Arniston, with its beautiful Highland check pattern, is made from 100% recycled plastic bottles. Planet-friendly rugs? Yes, please!

See the full *Country Living* Collection at carpetright.co.uk/brands/country-living

COUNTRY LIVING | carpetright

SYON IN NATURAL,
FROM £249

SYON IN TEAL,
FROM £249

CHALFIELD IN DUCK EGG,
FROM £79

CHALFIELD IN TAUPE,
FROM £79

HARDWICK IN WARM GREY,
FROM £399

HOLKHAM IN GREY,
FROM £249

ARNISTON IN NAVY,
FROM £119

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK SCOTT

STARS

YASMIN BOLAND REVEALS WHAT'S IN STORE FOR YOU THIS MONTH

ARIES

21st March to 20th April

If you've felt like your career has been imploding in the past few years, you can now breathe a sigh of relief. The very rare (but long) astrocycle that brought this about is finally ending this month. Hopefully, you feel like a boss – but if not, prepare for a dynamic new start. It really can happen now.

TAURUS

21st April to 21st May

Now is the time for you to decide what you want professionally. Are you willing to start over again with a career rebirth? Or are you ready to burn the whole thing down? As Pluto, the planet of passion and destruction, moves into your Career Zone, these are questions that need answering asap.

GEMINI

22nd May to 22nd June

If your sex life and finances have been decimated these past few years, the astrological energies responsible are finally easing up. You've been under fire since 2008, when Pluto moved into Capricorn, and, as of this month, things can be different. Set some intentions around these subjects and you'll see.

CANCER

23rd June to 23rd July

So, how's your love life? Romance that's crashed and burned in recent years has needed to – maybe it went toxic and needed a clean-out. Now, with Pluto moving into your Love Zone, the pressure is off and you can be romantically born again! If your love life is in one piece, take a moment to appreciate all that's good in your relationship.

LEO

24th July to 23rd August

Let's hope you're up for a relationship challenge – personally and professionally – as that's what is coming now. Over the next few months, you can expect to feel like a love bomb has gone off in your life (hopefully in a really good way). Avoid power struggles with a partner or ex for best results. You have been warned!

PISCES

20th February to 20th March

HAVE FRIENDS HAD A LOT TO PUT UP WITH FROM YOU THESE PAST FEW YEARS? IF YOU'VE BEEN CONTROLLING IN YOUR WORST MOMENTS, YOU'LL NOW SEE THAT NEGATIVE BEHAVIOUR GETS YOU NOWHERE. AND IF YOU'VE HAD FRIENDS DO THE SAME TO YOU, HOPEFULLY, YOU'VE MOVED ON!

VIRGO

24th August to 23rd September

Now is the time to do your best Virgo thing and detox your life. This isn't just about diet or drinking habits – it's about everything: friendships, your romantic life, your house, even your calendar and routines. Aim to get rid of the old and make space for the new.

LIBRA

24th September to 23rd October

The past decade or so has been a little like living on top of a volcano for many Librans. Your home and/or family life has been subject to the perilous energies of the planet of nuclear destruction and volcanic eruptions, aka Pluto. That ends now, so expect your personal life to be a lot less challenging in the coming months.

SCORPIO

24th October to 22nd November

Have you seen how your thoughts can create your reality? All those times you thought, 'I can't stand my partner/job!' and then the partner/job disappears. Do you finally get it? This has been the lesson firing at you non-stop over the past 10 years or so. Now you understand the power of your thoughts, take greater care of your mindset.

SAGITTARIUS

23rd November to 21st December

If your self-esteem or finances have been through the wringer, try to relax a little. You have survived a very tough financial cycle recently, and if either of these things are still in one piece, hang in there. Now is the time to start rebuilding. What will be your first step?

CAPRICORN

22nd December to 20th January

Does your life look like it did back in 2008? If so, you've either been living in a cave or living your best life! Suffice to say, eruptive Pluto, which moved into Capricorn in 2008, finally departs this month. You've been challenged to an incredible degree and if you're 99% okay, you've grown in amazing ways. Now life eases up.

AQUARIUS

21st January to 19th February

You're one of the signs most challenged right now due to many factors. The past few years have been all about blasting through your fears, and even if you haven't succeeded, you've probably been paying a price for not working through them. If you're still fearful, try one more time – hopefully you will move forwards.

For your extended month forecast, visit Yasmin's website at yasminboland.com

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LATHAM & NEVE

Known for their stunning British contemporary silver and gold jewellery. Ballroom bangles, awesome earrings, knockout necklaces and much much more! Distinctive, sculptural pieces all designed and hand-made in Britain which really are made to be worn.

lathamandneve.co.uk

WINTER SALE: SAVE UP TO 20% ON BRITISH HANDMADE FURNITURE

Willow & Hall design and sell quality upholstered living and bedroom furniture, handmade in Britain, using the finest materials. Designs are available in over 150 fabrics and with a choice of seat fillings. Sofa beds come with three luxury mattress options, and with a depth of 14cm, they're perfect for occasional or everyday use. They also offer nationwide delivery from 6 weeks and a 14-day free returns policy, whatever your personalisation.

Visit willowandhall.co.uk or call 020 8939 3800 for more information or to order free samples.

This month's ESSENTIALS

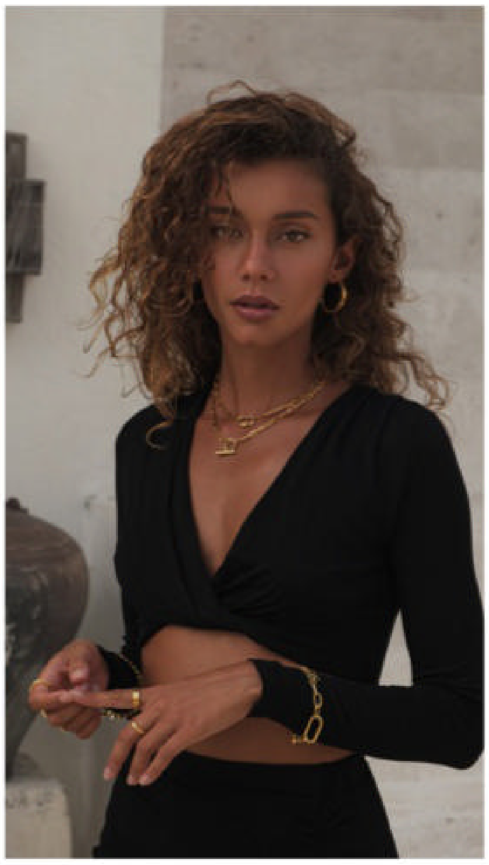
LOOK YOUNGER LONGER REGENTIV SPECIALIST SERUM (WITH RETINOL)

REGENTIV
THE SPECIALIST SERUM

This delicate and oh so effective serum for lines, wrinkles, crepey eyes and neck, vertical lip lines, sun damage and much more. Unique formulation of retinol palmitate, aloe vera, vitamin E, SPF, moisturiser – perfect to use twice daily. 35ml £32.95, 50ml £49.95, 105ml £79.95, 200ml £149.

To receive exclusive 15% reader discount apply code RED15 when ordering. www.regentiv.com or call 01923 212555 for advice or to order. Please see website for full range and special offers.

SLIDE JEWELS



Slide Jewels believes that every woman deserves to feel confident. Therefore, Slide creates unique, and carefully crafted premium stainless steel and 18K gold plated jewellery.

For the past three years, Slide has created a like minded community, around an ultimate goal: to help women embody their uniqueness through timeless pieces.

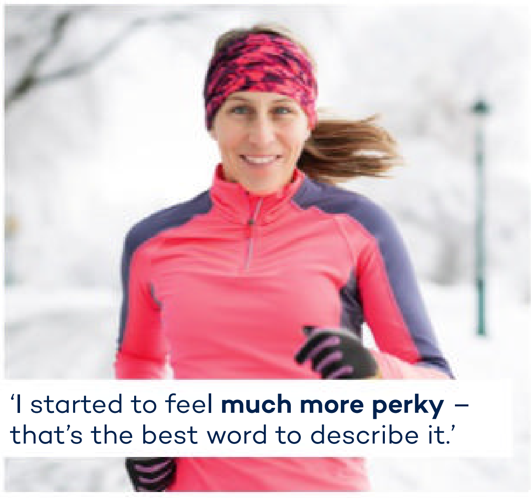
Members get access to exquisite jewellery pieces, inspiring them to showcase them on their social's. Feel empowered – join and wear Slide.

Visit: www.slidejewels.com
Instagram: @slidejewels

Advertisement

Often feel fatigued? Try **magnesium**

Feeling tired and don’t know why? You’re not alone. According to a recent study, less than half of us consume our recommended daily amount of magnesium, a mineral that helps turn the food we eat into energy.


‘I started to feel **much more perky** – that’s the best word to describe it.’

Best known for helping to reduce tiredness and fatigue, magnesium is also vital for our health.

Deficiency can cause mood swings, migraines, eye twitches and muscle cramps.

If you have low magnesium levels, you are also less likely to get a good night’s sleep.

Magnesium is present in foods such as black beans, bananas and pumpkin seeds, but to get the benefits we need to absorb it into our bodies.

One way to ensure we consume a consistent level of magnesium is by taking a daily supplement – but not all supplements are equal.

Your body’s ability to absorb the magnesium depends on the way that the supplement is made.

‘Most supplements use magnesium oxide – it is the most common form, as it has a high concentration of magnesium but it’s not easily released into the body,’ explains Dr Miriam Ferrer PhD, head of product development at FutureYou Cambridge.

‘Taking more magnesium to try and make up for the problem isn’t the best approach, as too much can cause an upset stomach so we created Magnesium+ using magnesium lactate which is twice as absorbable as a standard magnesium oxide supplement. This means you need much less per capsule to deliver the same amount, making it a much more efficient way to take this essential mineral.’

Reviews gathered on independent website Trustpilot speak of its effectiveness. ‘It gives your body a magnesium boost without upsetting your digestive system,’ writes Robert.

And Nicole, 57, says: ‘I genuinely started to feel different within a couple of weeks. I started to feel much more perky – that’s the best word to describe it.

‘I feel like I’ve got more energy and more desire to do stuff. I’ve taken them religiously ever since.’

FREE magnesium supplements offer

Leading Cambridge company to offer scientifically proven energy range supplements for free.

FutureYou
CAMBRIDGE
Magnesium+

*Just pay £1.50 postage

FutureYou Cambridge, a nutraceutical company known for its well-researched nutritional supplements, is giving away packs of its flagship energy product to new customers.

The offer is aimed at helping the over 30s, who commonly suffer with low energy and fatigue, but is open to people of all ages. It comes after the Cambridge firm received a flurry of positive reviews for its best-selling energy product on Trustpilot, the independent online review platform.

‘I am a woman of 74, and a few months ago I realised that I had no energy at all. I put it down to my age, but it was really impacting on my life in so many ways. My husband read an ad for Magnesium+ and I thought I would give it a try. Within two weeks I was a different woman, with energy to spare,’ says Anne.

“Within two weeks I was a different woman, with energy to spare”

Adam Cleevely, FutureYou Cambridge’s CEO, explains the thinking behind the offer: ‘After receiving so much positive feedback on Magnesium+, our team is confident that people will love it within their first pack.

‘So we’ve decided to offer that first pack for free, because our team is excited to spread the word about Magnesium+ with as many people as possible – as excited as our customers, who have been leaving such amazing reviews.’

HOW TO CLAIM YOUR FREE PACK

To claim your free 28 day Magnesium+ subscription trial pack worth £11.50, visit **FutureYouOffers.co.uk** or freephone

0800 808 5740

quoting code

MGF597

Your first box is free (just pay £1.50 postage) and you will be enrolled into a flexible subscription costing £11.50 every 28 days, which you can cancel at any time, without obligation.

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FutureYou CAMBRIDGE

***Magnesium contributes to: a reduction of tiredness and fatigue, a normal energy-yielding metabolism, normal functioning of the nervous system, normal muscle function and normal psychological function**. Introductory offer valid for new UK customers only. Offer expires 30th April 2023. See FutureYouHealth.com/MGF597 for full terms and conditions.

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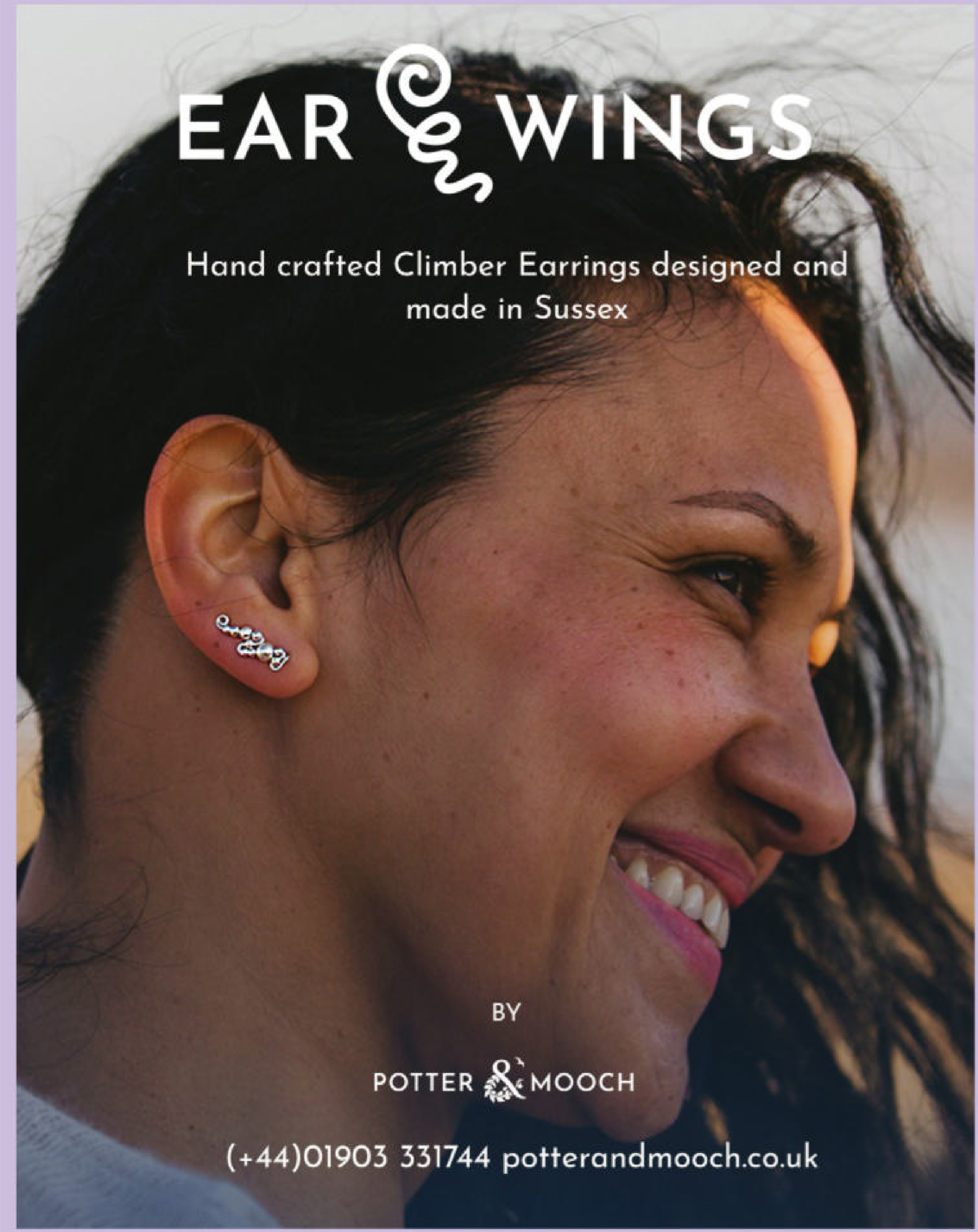

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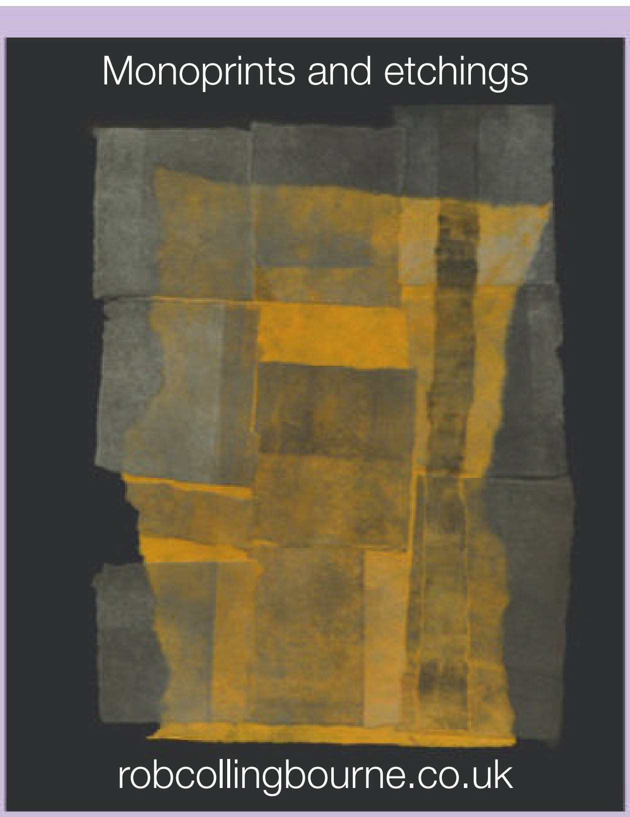

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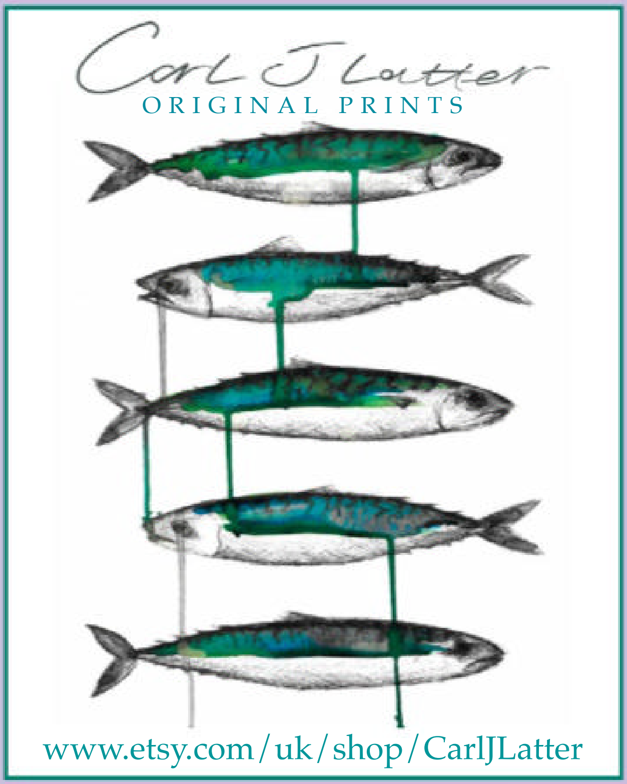

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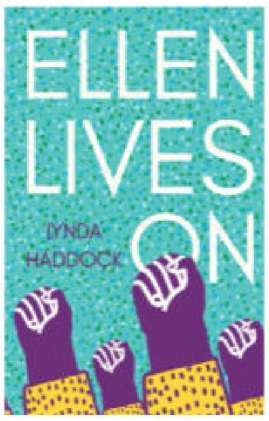

ELLEN LIVES ON
by Lynda Haddock

When 15 year-old Ellen returns home from school in Yorkshire, her world is fragmented as she finds her mother has hanged herself. A dark mist descends, yet somehow she must find a new way to live. After her mother's funeral, Ellen is taken to live with her aunt and uncle and pressed into housework, forced to wait on the men of the household. She rebels by running away to London. There she learns to stand up: for women and for herself.

www.troubador.co.uk/bookshop/young-adult/ellen-lives-on/

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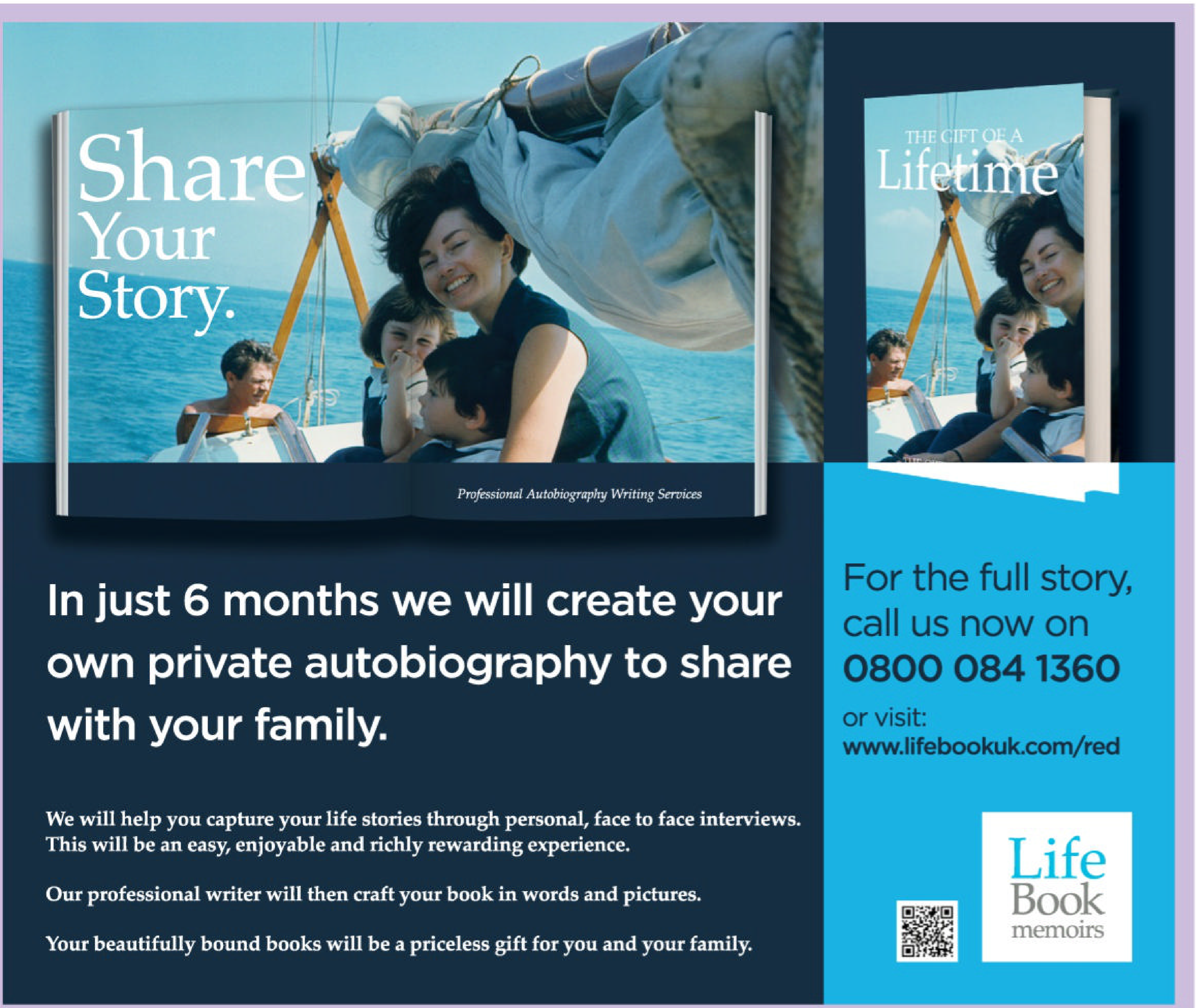
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My list of EVERYTHING

FASHION DESIGNER **WIGGY HINDMARCH** ON HER FAVOURITE THINGS

Wiggy loves chips, olive trees and Chanel Baume Essentiel

MY CAN'T-MISS PODCAST IS... *The Diary Of A CEO* with Steven Bartlett. I learn something every time I listen.

THE CANDLE I LOVE TO LIGHT IS... Rigaud Cyprès. Jackie O used to burn it in The White House.

MY SIGNATURE LIPSTICK IS... I tend to use cheek highlighters on my lips, such as Chantecaille Luster or Chanel Baume Essentiel. I like it when my lips slightly blend into my face.

MY FAVOURITE INDEPENDENT SHOP IS... I haven't visited in person yet, but I love the aesthetic at Plain Goods.

MY FOODIE WEAKNESS IS... Cheese, salami, black olives and traditional chip-shop chips smothered in salt and vinegar.

WHEN I SEND FLOWERS, I CALL... I prefer to send little olive trees, so the recipient can keep it for ever.

MY ONE-STOP MORNING COFFEE SHOP IS... My commute to work is all of three minutes, so it's usually a home-made hazelnut latte in a travel cup. I'm not fussy when it comes to coffee – a Starbucks full-fat latte is my kind of speed.

ON TOAST, I LOVE TO SPREAD... Bovril and lots of sea salt crystal butter.

MY FAVOURITE PAIR OF SHOES IS... My gold glitter Chanel slingbacks.

THE SHADE I ALWAYS PAINT MY NAILS IS... Something natural and healthy-looking – either Dior Nail Glow, which gives your nails an oxygenated hue, or classic Essie Sugar Daddy.

THE BOOK I KEEP ON MY BEDSIDE TABLE IS... The yearly almanac and a crossword puzzle book. I'm currently reading *The Paper Palace* by Miranda Cowley Heller, which I'm loving.

THE ALBUM I'LL NEVER GROW TIRED OF IS... *Astral Weeks: Live At The Hollywood Bowl* by Van Morrison.

MY BEST-EVER HOLIDAY WAS... It's hard to beat Harbour Island in the Bahamas, but we also had a magical weekend in the Swedish Archipelago, which really stuck with me.

MY FAVOURITE HOTEL FOR A WEEKEND AWAY IS... I keep having to cancel weekends away, but we're off to Lyngen Lodge in Norway soon. I also want to stay at The Newt in Somerset.

THE THINGS I CAN'T STOP BUYING FOR MY HOME ARE... Antiques and strange, eclectic objets.

THE SONG THAT GETS ME ON THE DANCEFLOOR IS... House of Pain's *Jump Around.*

WHEN I WANT TO CRY WITH LAUGHTER, I CALL... It's not so much who – I just scroll back through the funny memes or videos I've sent my kids or friends for an instant hit of hilarity.

MY FOOLPROOF DINNER-PARTY DISH IS... A delicious steak, chips and salad. That's what everyone really wants, and it's so easy, it allows you to actually spend time with your guests.

THE MANTRA I LIVE BY IS... Stay true to oneself and to others, and be guided by one's own principles.

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